

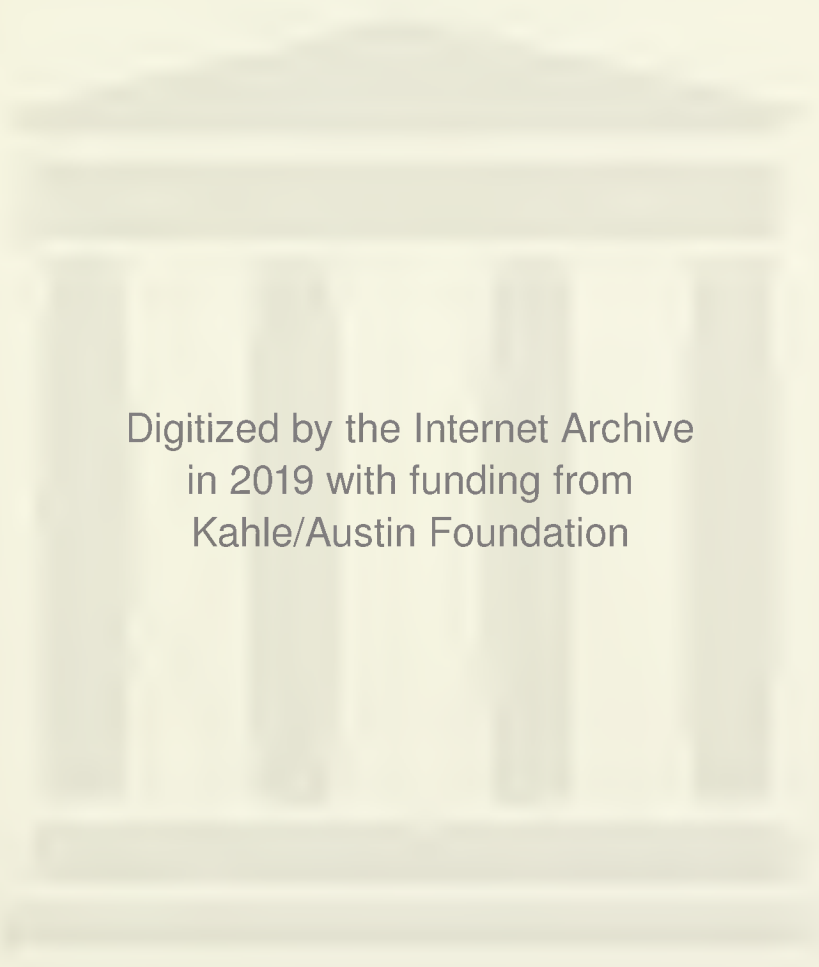




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EXAMINATION OF  
McTAGGART'S PHILOSOPHY

IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOLUME II



# EXAMINATION OF McTAGGART'S PHILOSOPHY

Volume II. Part I

BY

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OCTAGON BOOKS

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A DIVISION OF FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX

New York . 1976



B1647.M17N3733 1976 v.2, pt.1

First published in 1938 by Cambridge University Press

*Reprinted 1976  
by permission of Cambridge University Press*

OCTAGON BOOKS  
A DIVISION OF FARRAR, STRAUS & GIROUX, INC.  
19 Union Square West  
New York, N.Y. 10003

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Broad, Charlie Dunbar, 1887-1971.

Examination of McTaggart's philosophy.

Reprint of the 1933-1938 ed. published by the University Press,  
Cambridge, Eng.

1. McTaggart, John McTaggart Ellis, 1866-1925. The nature of  
existence. 2. Ontology. 3. Reality. I. Title.

B1647.M17N3733 1976  
ISBN 0-374-90994-6

192

76-8912

Manufactured by Braun-Brumfield, Inc.  
Ann Arbor, Michigan  
Printed in the United States of America

*To*  
IAN GALLIE

Aspice: namque omnem, quae nunc obducta tuenti  
Mortales hebetat visus tibi, et humida circum  
Caligat, nubem eripiam. . . .

.....

Apparent dirae facies, inimicaque Troiae  
Numina magna deum.  
Tum vero omne mihi visum considerare in ignes  
Ilium et ex imo verti Neptunia Troia.

VERGIL *Aeneid* Book II

# ANALYTIC TABLE OF CONTENTS

## VOLUME II. PART I

|                                           |           |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <i>Preface</i> . . . . .                  | page lxxi |
| <i>Directions to the Reader</i> . . . . . | lxxv      |

## INTRODUCTION 3

### BOOK VI

#### THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Argument of Book VI . . . . . | 17 |
|-------------------------------|----|

### CHAPTER XXV

#### CLASSIFICATION OF OSTENSIBLE EXPERIENCES: OSTENSIBLE COGITATIONS

|                                                                   |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. CLASSIFICATION OF OSTENSIBLE COGITATIONS .                     | 19-32 |
| Statement and explanation of McTaggart's classification . . . . . | 19-21 |
| 1.1. <i>McTaggart's Account of Imaging</i> . . . . .              | 21-31 |
| Statement of McTaggart's doctrine of Imaging .                    | 21-26 |
| 1.11. <i>Criticism of McTaggart's Account of Imaging</i> .        | 26-31 |
| Summary of the criticisms . . . . .                               | 29-31 |
| 1.2. <i>Criticism of McTaggart's Classification</i> . .           | 31-32 |
| An amended classification proposed . . . . .                      | 32    |

### CHAPTER XXVI

#### CERTAIN KINDS OF OSTENSIBLE COGITATION (I) OSTENSIBLE PREHENSION

|                                                                                                         |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. McTAGGART'S ACCOUNT OF PREHENSION . . .                                                              | 33-55 |
| Prehension is acquaintance with particulars as having certain characteristics . . . . .                 | 33    |
| McTaggart holds that misprehension is possible .                                                        | 33-34 |
| Three properties which prehension must have if it is to generate a determining-correspondence hierarchy | 34    |

|                                                                                                                                 |            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 1.1. <i>Can a Mindprehend another Mind and its Experiences?</i> . . . . .                                                       | page 34-38 |
| There is no empirical evidence that it does, and many people would hold that it cannot . . . . .                                | 35         |
| McTaggart thinks that this conviction may be due to a confusion between owning an experience and prehendng it . . . . .         | 36         |
| Independent discussion of the question . . . . .                                                                                | 37-38      |
| The fact of telepathy, even if it were established, would probably be irrelevant to the question . . . . .                      | 38         |
| 1.2. <i>Are Prehensions parts of the Mind which is prehendng?</i> . . . . .                                                     | 38-47      |
| Statement of McTaggart's doctrine and of the alternative which he rejects . . . . .                                             | 39         |
| McTaggart's first two arguments for his doctrine stated and criticised . . . . .                                                | 40         |
| His third argument stated and criticised . . . . .                                                                              | 41-42      |
| His fourth argument stated and criticised . . . . .                                                                             | 42-44      |
| His <i>argumentum ad hominem</i> to persons who admit that pleasures and pains are parts of the mind which feels them . . . . . | 44-46      |
| Summary of the position . . . . .                                                                                               | 46         |
| McTaggart's doctrine cannot be finally judged until we have considered his constructive theory of Temporal Appearance . . . . . | 46-47      |
| 1.3. <i>Can a Prehension of a Part be part of a Prehension of a Whole?</i> . . . . .                                            | 47-55      |
| Conditions in which McTaggart holds that it can . . . . .                                                                       | 47-48      |
| Are they sufficient? McTaggart's illustration is unsatisfactory . . . . .                                                       | 48-49      |
| Are they necessary? The question is complicated by the alleged possibility of misprehension . . . . .                           | 49-51      |
| Summary of the position . . . . .                                                                                               | 51         |
| 1.31. <i>Could one prehend a Whole without prehendng any Part of it?</i> . . . . .                                              | 51-55      |
| McTaggart says that this is possible. Many philosophers have tacitly assumed the exact opposite . . . . .                       | 51-52      |
| Statement of two intermediate alternative possibilities . . . . .                                                               | 52         |
| Discussion of these alternatives . . . . .                                                                                      | 52-55      |
| A general principle proposed for consideration . . . . .                                                                        | 55         |



## CONTENTS

ix

|                                                                                                               |            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 2. McTAGGART'S "INDIRECT PERCEPTION" . . .                                                                    | page 55-58 |
| The notion explained . . . . .                                                                                | 56         |
| McTaggart's attempt to show that indirect perception of <i>O</i> is analogous to prehension of <i>O</i> . . . | 57         |
| It seems doubtful whether one could indirectly perceive any object which one did not also apprehend .         | 58         |

## CHAPTER XXVII

### CERTAIN KINDS OF OSTENSIBLE COGITATION (II) OSTENSIBLE SENSE-PERCEPTION

|                                                                                                        |       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. INDEPENDENT ACCOUNT OF OSTENSIBLE SENSE-PERCEPTION . . . . .                                        | 59-71 |
| 1.1. <i>Various Kinds of Sense-perception</i> . . . . .                                                | 59-65 |
| Extra-somatic and intra-somatic sense-perception.<br>Three kinds of the former distinguished . . . . . | 59    |
| Comparison between seeing and hearing . . . . .                                                        | 59-61 |
| Characteristics of tactual perception . . . . .                                                        | 61-62 |
| Summary of the likenesses and unlikenesses of sight, hearing, and touch . . . . .                      | 62    |
| Peculiarities of intra-somatic perception . . . . .                                                    | 63    |
| Comparison of intra-somatic perception with the three forms of extra-somatic perception . . .          | 63-65 |
| 1.2. <i>Perception of Physical Events</i> . . . . .                                                    | 65-68 |
| Two factors involved in auditory perception . . . . .                                                  | 65-66 |
| The factor of "perceptual acceptance" discussed . . . . .                                              | 66    |
| Definition of "having an auditory perception" . . . . .                                                | 66-67 |
| Distinction between "hearing so-and-so" and "having an auditory perception of so-and-so" . . .         | 67-68 |
| Three further questions raised . . . . .                                                               | 68    |
| 1.3. <i>Sensibilia and Sensa</i> . . . . .                                                             | 68-71 |
| Definition of "sensibile" and "quasi-sensibile" . . . . .                                              | 69    |
| Definition of "sensum". Remarks on the implications of these definitions . . . . .                     | 70    |
| Four questions raised about sensory experiences . . . . .                                              | 70-71 |
| 2. McTAGGART'S ACCOUNT OF SENSE-PERCEPTION . . . . .                                                   | 71-87 |
| McTaggart's definition of "material substance" . . . . .                                               | 72    |

|                                                                                                                                                       |            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 2.1. <i>The Theory in Some Dogmas of Religion</i> . . .                                                                                               | page 72-74 |
| Belief in matter needs justification, and could not be justified except by causal inference from sensations . . . . .                                 | 72         |
| Such inference is invalid, and the alleged existence of matter is an idle possibility . . . . .                                                       | 73         |
| The Causal and the Phenomenalist Theories. McTaggart hovers between them . . . . .                                                                    | 73-74      |
| 2.2. <i>Further Development in The Nature of Existence</i> .                                                                                          | 74-87      |
| Statement of McTaggart's theory in ten propositions . . . . .                                                                                         | 75-76      |
| Discussion of the first four. Analysis of sensory experiences . . . . .                                                                               | 76-80      |
| Can they all be analysed into act of sensing and sensum? . . . . .                                                                                    | 77-78      |
| The theory that sensibilia are states of the mind which senses them . . . . .                                                                         | 78-80      |
| Summary of conclusions on this topic . . . . .                                                                                                        | 80         |
| The eighth proposition. Nature of sensible qualities . . . . .                                                                                        | 80-83      |
| McTaggart's doctrine and his arguments for it . . . . .                                                                                               | 80-81      |
| An alternative theory stated . . . . .                                                                                                                | 81-82      |
| Differences between colours and olfactory qualities . . . . .                                                                                         | 82-83      |
| The fifth, sixth, and tenth propositions. Relation between sensing and perceiving, and between sensed sensible and perceived material thing . . . . . | 83-86      |
| The fifth proposition rejected . . . . .                                                                                                              | 83-84      |
| McTaggart's argument for the sixth proposition is weakened by his admitting the existence of misapprehension . . . . .                                | 84         |
| McTaggart denies that one sensum can have several sensible qualities. This seems unjustified . . . . .                                                | 85-86      |
| McTaggart denies that the same sensum can change in respect of its sensible qualities. This seems to be a matter of definition . . . . .              | 86-87      |

## CHAPTER XXVIII

## OSTENSIBLE VOLITION

|                                                                               |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. McTAGGART'S ANALYSIS OF VOLITION . . . . .                                 | 88-92 |
| To desire an object is to cogitate it desiringly . . . . .                    | 88-90 |
| McTaggart's argument stated and criticised . . . . .                          | 90-91 |
| His conclusion tentatively accepted. Volition compared with emotion . . . . . | 91-92 |

# CONTENTS

xi

|                                                                                                                                    |             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 2. FURTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT VOLITION . . . . .                                                                                      | page 92-101 |
| 2.1. <i>Alleged Necessary Condition of Desire</i> . . . . .                                                                        | 92          |
| Desire-moving qualities cannot all be brought under<br>one heading . . . . .                                                       | 92          |
| 2.2. <i>Connexion of Desire with Time and Change</i> . . . . .                                                                     | 93-98       |
| Independent statement of the position . . . . .                                                                                    | 93-96       |
| “Wishing”, “hoping”, “desiring”, and “being glad<br>that” compared when concerned with present or<br>past events . . . . .         | 93-94       |
| The same terms compared when concerned with the<br>existence or non-existence of God and with future<br>events . . . . .           | 95          |
| Do all these phrases connote the presence of a single<br>psychical quality qualifying cogitations of different<br>kinds? . . . . . | 96          |
| McTaggart holds that desire is primarily acquiescent<br>cogitation, and is not necessarily directed towards<br>change . . . . .    | 96-97       |
| Restatement of McTaggart’s doctrine. The evidence<br>of introspection is not conclusive . . . . .                                  | 97          |
| “Wishing”, “hoping”, and “being glad that” com-<br>pared when concerned with timeless objects . . . . .                            | 98          |
| 2.3. <i>The Nature of Aversion</i> . . . . .                                                                                       | 98-99       |
| McTaggart holds that aversion to <i>X</i> is just desire for<br>non- <i>X</i> . This seems most unpalatable . . . . .              | 99          |
| 2.4. <i>Can every kind of Cogitation be a Desire?</i> . . . . .                                                                    | 99-100      |
| The only doubt is about states of ostensible knowing,<br>full belief, or prehension . . . . .                                      | 100         |
| 2.5. <i>Importance of these Questions for McTaggart’s System</i>                                                                   | 101         |
| McTaggart needs to hold that correct prehensions of<br>timeless objects can be desires . . . . .                                   | 101         |
| 3. FULFILMENT AND FRUSTRATION OF DESIRE . . . . .                                                                                  | 102-104     |
| A desire is fulfilled if it is a veridical cogitation; it is<br>frustrated if it is a delusive cogitation . . . . .                | 102         |
| This needs qualification if applied to desires about the<br>future . . . . .                                                       | 102-103     |
| The experience of “being glad that” discussed . . . . .                                                                            | 103         |
| A veridical cogitation can be the object of a frustrated<br>desire . . . . .                                                       | 103-104     |

|                                                                                                                                                                             |          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| If all cogitation were veridical prehension, there would be no frustrated desire. But, on our view (though not on McTaggart's), there might be fulfilled aversion . . . . . | page 104 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|

## CHAPTER XXIX

## OSTENSIBLE EMOTION AND OSTENSIBLE PLEASURE-PAIN

|                                                                                                                                                                                             |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. McTAGGART'S ANALYSIS OF EMOTION . . . .                                                                                                                                                  | 105-113 |
| His theory of Emotion is like his theory of Volition, and his argument for it is open to the same objections . . . . .                                                                      | 106     |
| Emotion felt in respect of a characteristic, and emotion felt towards an object as such . . .                                                                                               | 107-108 |
| Further analysis of this distinction. Restatement of McTaggart's doctrine about it . . . . .                                                                                                | 108-109 |
| It is doubtful whether the two classes of emotion are mutually exclusive . . . . .                                                                                                          | 110     |
| Unnoticed qualities in perceived objects may have emotional effects . . . . .                                                                                                               | 110-111 |
| McTaggart's list of emotional qualities . . . .                                                                                                                                             | 111     |
| McTaggart fails to distinguish between emotions, emotional dispositions, and sentiments . . . .                                                                                             | 111-112 |
| Relation between emotion and volition . . . .                                                                                                                                               | 112     |
| Any kind of cogitation can be an emotion, and it can be both an emotion and a volition . . . .                                                                                              | 113     |
| 2. LOVE AND OTHER EMOTIONS DEPENDENT ON IT .                                                                                                                                                | 113-130 |
| McTaggart's description of Love. Its object must be a person . . . . .                                                                                                                      | 113     |
| It must not be confused with benevolence or with sympathy . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 113-114 |
| It does not necessarily involve sexual desire, and it has no uniform connexion with pleasure . . .                                                                                          | 114     |
| It has hardly any connexion with moral approval .                                                                                                                                           | 114-115 |
| Love for a person may be caused by his qualities, but is never felt in respect of his qualities . . . .                                                                                     | 115     |
| Being caused by trivial characteristics does not render intense love inordinate; and love for which we can see no adequate cause is not judged by us to be therefore unreasonable . . . . . | 115-116 |

# CONTENTS

xiii

|                                                                                                                                                      |          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Changes in the beloved, or in the lover's beliefs about his qualities, ought not to destroy love. Hatred differs from love in these respects . . . . | page 116 |
| <i>A</i> will love <i>B</i> if and only if <i>A</i> is conscious of a very intimate union between himself and <i>B</i> . . . .                       | 116-117  |
| No-one can literally love himself . . . .                                                                                                            | 117      |
| 2.1. <i>Comments on McTaggart's Account of Love</i> . . . .                                                                                          | 117-126  |
| <i>A</i> cannot love <i>B</i> unless he has met <i>B</i> . . . .                                                                                     | 117      |
| Therefore <i>A</i> may have been caused to love <i>B</i> by unnoticed qualities of <i>B</i> 's organism in every case . . . .                        | 117-118  |
| The word "love" is highly ambiguous even when confined to human relations . . . .                                                                    | 118-119  |
| We may take sexual and maternal love as central instances . . . . .                                                                                  | 119      |
| Erotic emotion is certainly complex. Does it contain any unique constituent? . . . . .                                                               | 120      |
| Love is, properly speaking, a sentiment, not merely an emotion . . . . .                                                                             | 121      |
| Illustrations of this fact from sexual and maternal love . . . . .                                                                                   | 121-122  |
| Application to McTaggart's doctrine that love is never felt in respect of qualities . . . . .                                                        | 123      |
| We do sometimes condemn love as inordinate . . . . .                                                                                                 | 123-124  |
| Our evaluations of sentiments depend on at least four factors . . . . .                                                                              | 124      |
| Changes in <i>B</i> 's qualities, and their effects on <i>A</i> 's love for him . . . . .                                                            | 125      |
| McTaggart's necessary and sufficient conditions for love are not satisfactory . . . . .                                                              | 125-126  |
| 2.2. <i>Emotions dependent on Love</i> . . . . .                                                                                                     | 126-128  |
| McTaggart's account of "Complacency" . . . . .                                                                                                       | 126-127  |
| His account of "Self-reverence". It assumes that love is the supremely valuable experience . . . .                                                   | 127      |
| And it depends on an ambiguity in the phrase "having supreme value" . . . . .                                                                        | 128      |
| 2.3. <i>Concluding Remarks on this Topic</i> . . . . .                                                                                               | 128-130  |
| It is doubtful whether "love" has any clear meaning as applied to the relations of disembodied minds . . . .                                         | 129-130  |

|                                                                                                            |              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 3. PLEASURE AND PAIN . . . . .                                                                             | page 130-132 |
| McTaggart regards pleasures and pains as hedonically<br>toned cogitations . . . . .                        | 130          |
| Unpleasant and painful, pleasant and orgiastic,<br>experiences . . . . .                                   | 131          |
| Analysis of Masochism . . . . .                                                                            | 132          |
| 4. McTAGGART'S CLASSIFICATION OF EXPERIENCES . . . . .                                                     | 132-133      |
| According to McTaggart all experiences are cogita-<br>tions . . . . .                                      | 132          |
| But may there not also be experiences, viz., feelings,<br>which have no epistemological objects? . . . . . | 133          |

## CHAPTER XXX

OSTENSIBLE SELFHOOD AND OSTENSIBLE  
SELF-KNOWLEDGE

|                                                                                                                                       |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. SPIRITUALITY . . . . .                                                                                                             | 134-141 |
| McTaggart defines "spirituality" in terms of selfhood . . . . .                                                                       | 134     |
| He holds that to be spiritual and to be spatial are self-<br>evidently incompatible . . . . .                                         | 134-135 |
| He tries to make this obvious by an apparently absurd<br>example . . . . .                                                            | 135     |
| But the absurdity depends on the verbal form in<br>which it is expressed . . . . .                                                    | 135-136 |
| It vanishes when the example is fairly stated . . . . .                                                                               | 137-138 |
| Spirituality and extension seem to be too disparate<br>to conflict . . . . .                                                          | 139     |
| But this disparateness makes it difficult to attach any<br>clear meaning to the suggestion that they might be<br>coinherent . . . . . | 139-141 |
| 2. SELFHOOD AND SELVES . . . . .                                                                                                      | 141-199 |
| 2.1. <i>McTaggart's Doctrine of the Self</i> . . . . .                                                                                | 141-173 |
| Selves, and they only, have experiences. A self's<br>experiences are parts of it . . . . .                                            | 141     |
| The latter proposition is not plausible apart from<br>McTaggart's rejection of Time . . . . .                                         | 142-143 |
| Is every part of a self one of its experiences? . . . . .                                                                             | 143     |
| No. But every self has a set of parts, each of which<br>is one of its experiences . . . . .                                           | 144     |



# CONTENTS

xv

|                                                                                                                                 |                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| If McTaggart's metaphysics is correct, one's everyday experiences do not form a set of parts of one's self                      | <i>page</i> 144 |
| What is the categorical basis of mental dispositions?                                                                           | 145             |
| It cannot be anything material, if McTaggart is right                                                                           | 145-147         |
| The difficulty about dispositions is not greater for McTaggart than for other Mentalists, but it is more obvious . . . . .      | 148             |
| A "trace" would have to be some modification in a self's experiences which is propagated to all its later experiences . . . . . | 149             |
| Here again McTaggart's rejection of Time greatly modifies the problem . . . . .                                                 | 149-150         |
| His theory about dispositions is like Leibniz's theory of confused perceptions . . . . .                                        | 150             |
| Every experience must be owned by some self . . . . .                                                                           | 151             |
| In one sense of "experience" this is analytic, in another sense it is synthetic and uncertain . . . . .                         | 151-152         |
| Two selves cannot have any part in common . . . . .                                                                             | 152             |
| One self cannot be part of another self . . . . .                                                                               | 153             |
| A geometrical analogy to the possibility that two selves of the same order might have some experiences in common . . . . .      | 153-154         |
| Another analogy to the possibility that a self of one order might be part of a self of a higher order . . . . .                 | 154-155         |
| The phenomena of multiple personality are irrelevant to this question . . . . .                                                 | 155             |
| McTaggart's explanation of how people may have been led to think that one self could be part of another . . . . .               | 155-156         |
| A self need not be cognising at every moment of its existence . . . . .                                                         | 156             |
| A self need not be actually or dispositionally self-conscious . . . . .                                                         | 156-157         |
| In one sense of "self" this would be analytically impossible . . . . .                                                          | 157             |
| There is a difference of kind between a mind which is, and one which is not, capable of reflexive cognition . . . . .           | 158             |
| All the minds about which we have approximately direct information are self-conscious . . . . .                                 | 158-159         |
| Every human mind does from time to time apprehend itself as a self . . . . .                                                    | 159             |
| McTaggart admits that this would be denied by many philosophers . . . . .                                                       | 159-160         |

|                                                                                                                                                                                   |              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| On McTaggart's analysis of prehension there is no <i>a priori</i> impossibility in a particular prehending itself                                                                 | page 160-161 |
| McTaggart's assertion of reflexive self-prehension is qualified by his later statements about the specious present . . . . .                                                      | 161-162      |
| It is doubtful whether McTaggart has a right to hold that a self can <i>prehend</i> itself . . . . .                                                                              | 163          |
| But he might have a right to hold that a self can <i>perceive</i> itself . . . . .                                                                                                | 163-164      |
| He has failed to distinguish between prehending and perceiving . . . . .                                                                                                          | 164-165      |
| Suggested restatement of his theory to meet these criticisms . . . . .                                                                                                            | 165          |
| McTaggart holds that <i>selfhood</i> is a <i>simple quality</i> , and that the idea of it is derived from prehending one's self as a self . . . . .                               | 165          |
| This must be carefully distinguished from the doctrine (which he rejects) that a <i>self</i> is or contains a <i>simple particular</i> . . . . .                                  | 165-166      |
| It is doubtful whether McTaggart can consistently hold his view about the origin of the idea of selfhood                                                                          | 166-167      |
| A similar point concerning the origin of the idea of material thinghood . . . . .                                                                                                 | 167-168      |
| Both concepts are empirical specifications of the <i>a priori</i> concept of continuant . . . . .                                                                                 | 168          |
| Neither concept can be formed without comparing a number of successive experiences . . . . .                                                                                      | 168-169      |
| 2.11. <i>Summary of McTaggart's Doctrine of the Self</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                | 169-173      |
| The doctrine consists of a common stem and two divergent branches. The common stem . . . . .                                                                                      | 169-172      |
| The unqualified branch. It assumes that a self can <i>prehend</i> itself . . . . .                                                                                                | 172          |
| The qualified branch. It assumes that a self can <i>perceive</i> itself, but cannot <i>prehend</i> itself. McTaggart never clearly formulated this alternative . . . . .          | 172-173      |
| 2.2. <i>McTaggart's Argument for Reflexive Self-prehension</i>                                                                                                                    | 173-199      |
| Definition of "reflexive self-prehension" . . . . .                                                                                                                               | 173-174      |
| 2.21. <i>Analysis of Ego-centric Facts</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                              | 174-176      |
| There are <i>prima facie</i> three possible analyses of such facts, viz., the Proper-Name Theory, the Disguised Description Theory, and the Logical Construction Theory . . . . . | 174-175      |

|                                                                                                                                              |              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| The Proper-Name Theory involves reflexive self-prehension; the others exclude it. McTaggart claims to refute the others . . . . .            | page 175-176 |
| 2·22. <i>Attempted Refutation of the Logical Construction Theory</i> . . . . .                                                               | 176-189      |
| There are two forms of this, viz., the Bundle Theory and the Somatocentric Theory . . . . .                                                  | 176          |
| 2·221. <i>The Bundle Theory</i> . . . . .                                                                                                    | 176-184      |
| It holds that ego-centric facts are about the direct inter-relations of experiences . . . . .                                                | 176-177      |
| McTaggart challenges its supporters to produce the relation. His objection is formally defective . . . . .                                   | 177          |
| The relation might be unique, or contain a unique constituent . . . . .                                                                      | 177-178      |
| Comparison between "belonging to the same self" and "lying on the same straight line" . . . . .                                              | 178          |
| The relation could be direct without being dyadic . . . . .                                                                                  | 178-179      |
| Analogy between a set of sympsychic experiences and a set of points on a generator of a cylinder . . . . .                                   | 179-180      |
| Some of the relations rejected by McTaggart may be constituents of the relation required by the Bundle Theory . . . . .                      | 180          |
| 2·2211. <i>Relation of the Bundle Theory to McTaggart's Theory</i> . . . . .                                                                 | 180-184      |
| Both reject the notion of a Pure Ego and the theory of reflexive self-consciousness associated with it . . . . .                             | 181          |
| McTaggart asserts, and the Bundle Theory denies, that there are particulars which are selves . . . . .                                       | 181-182      |
| The Bundle Theory is often incorrectly formulated in such a way that this ontological difference vanishes . . . . .                          | 182          |
| The incorrectly formulated Bundle Theory would still differ epistemologically from the unqualified form of McTaggart's Theory . . . . .      | 183          |
| But it might differ hardly at all from the qualified form of it . . . . .                                                                    | 183-184      |
| 2·222. <i>The Somatocentric Theory</i> . . . . .                                                                                             | 184-189      |
| It holds that to say that experiences belong to the same self is to say that they stand in a certain relation to the same organism . . . . . | 184          |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                          |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| McTaggart's attempted refutation assumes that anyone who judges that he is having a certain experience is <i>ipso facto</i> judging that this experience and this judgment belong to the same self . . . | page 185 |
| This premise must be rejected . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                  | 186      |
| McTaggart challenges supporters of the theory to produce the relation which it presupposes . . .                                                                                                         | 187-188  |
| Even if we accept McTaggart's premise, we can make a plausible answer to his challenge . . . . .                                                                                                         | 188      |
| The objection can be restated without using the doubtful premise . . . . .                                                                                                                               | 189      |
| 2.23. <i>Attempted Refutation of the Disguised Description Theory</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                          | 189-198  |
| On this theory a self knows itself only as the sole instance of a certain characteristic . . . . .                                                                                                       | 190      |
| 2.231. <i>Exclusive Descriptions of Selves</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                 | 190-191  |
| The property of <i>owning</i> a certain experience belongs to one and only one self. That of <i>prehending</i> a certain experience may belong to several selves . . .                                   | 190      |
| 2.232. <i>The Argument</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                     | 191-198  |
| McTaggart's argument to show that a self must know itself otherwise than merely as the <i>owner</i> of a certain experience . . . . .                                                                    | 191-193  |
| It uses the premise which we have already rejected in discussing the Somatocentric Theory . . .                                                                                                          | 193      |
| Restatement of the argument without this premise                                                                                                                                                         | 193-195  |
| McTaggart's argument to show that a self must know itself otherwise than merely as the <i>prehender</i> of a certain experience . . . . .                                                                | 195-196  |
| The same false premise reappears . . . . .                                                                                                                                                               | 196-197  |
| Restatement of the argument without this premise .                                                                                                                                                       | 197-198  |
| 2.24. <i>Final Estimate of McTaggart's Argument</i> . . .                                                                                                                                                | 198-199  |
| The argument, as modified, does refute the Disguised Description Theory. But it fails to refute the Bundle Theory, and so fails to establish the Proper-Name Theory . . . . .                            | 198      |
| The Proper-Name Theory is not really consistent with the qualified form of McTaggart's own theory                                                                                                        | 199      |

BOOK VII

THE TRIAL OF OSTENSIBLY EXEMPLIFIED  
CHARACTERISTICS

|                                |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Argument of Book VII . . . . . | page 201-202 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|

CHAPTER XXXI

OSTENSIBLE SELFHOOD AND OSTENSIBLE  
PREHENSION

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| The Endless-Divisibility Test and the Determining-<br>Correspondence Test . . . . .                                                                                                                                 | 203-204 |
| 1. APPLICATION OF THE TESTS . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                               | 204-207 |
| Selves and certain kinds of prehensions are <i>prima facie</i><br>capable of passing both tests . . . . .                                                                                                           | 205     |
| 1.1. $\omega$ -Prehensions and $r$ -Prehensions . . . . .                                                                                                                                                           | 206-207 |
| An $\omega$ -prehension is one which is a secondary part in a<br>determining-correspondence hierarchy in which the<br>relation is that of prehension to prehensum . . . . .                                         | 206     |
| Other prehensions are called " $r$ -prehensions" . . . . .                                                                                                                                                          | 206-207 |
| The tests do not rule out $r$ -prehensions <i>in limine</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                               | 207     |
| 2. THE CORRECTNESS OF $\omega$ -PREHENSIONS . . . . .                                                                                                                                                               | 207-221 |
| Every $\omega$ -prehension whose object is a self must pre-<br>sent it as a self, and every $\omega$ -prehension whose<br>object is an $\omega$ -prehension must present it as an<br>$\omega$ -prehension . . . . . | 208     |
| 2.1. <i>McTaggart's Argument</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                          | 209-218 |
| 2.2. <i>Criticism of McTaggart's Argument</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                             | 218-221 |
| For various reasons, which are given, McTaggart has<br>failed to prove his conclusion . . . . .                                                                                                                     | 221     |

CHAPTER XXXII

OSTENSIBLY NON-PREHENSIVE COGITATIONS

|                                                                                                                                                            |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| McTaggart ignores the possibility that a non-prehen-<br>sive cogitation might be a whole whose parts are all<br>prehensions . . . . .                      | 222 |
| The relation between a state of acquaintance with a<br>characteristic and that characteristic cannot be a<br>determining-correspondence relation . . . . . | 223 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Nor can the relation between an act of judging and a term judged about . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                    | page 224 |
| McTaggart's argument involves a confusion between "judgment" as mental act and as judicatum. But it can be restated . . . . .                                                                                                                                       | 224-225  |
| A similar argument can be applied to the relation between an act of supposing and a term supposed about . . . . .                                                                                                                                                   | 225      |
| In the case of imaging McTaggart's argument involves his mistaken analysis of that process. On the correct theory there is nothing that can be called " <i>the</i> relation between an imaging and its imaginatum" . . . . .                                        | 225-226  |
| McTaggart is right in holding that the relation of prehension to prehensum is the only cogitative relation which could be a determining-correspondence relation. But this does not suffice to prove, from his premises, that all cogitation is prehension . . . . . | 226-227  |

## CHAPTER XXXIII

## OSTENSIBLE SENSE-QUALITIES AND OSTENSIBLE MATERIALITY

|                                                                                                                    |         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| It is much more radical to deny that anything can be a sensum than to deny that anything can be material . . . . . | 228     |
| 1. McTAGGART'S ARGUMENT . . . . .                                                                                  | 229-252 |
| Statement of the argument in eight steps . . . . .                                                                 | 229-232 |
| 1.1. <i>Detailed account of Step iv</i> . . . . .                                                                  | 232-252 |
| This is the only step that involves anything new . . . . .                                                         | 232     |
| 1.11. <i>Spatial Extension</i> . . . . .                                                                           | 232-249 |
| In the argument "Matter" is used for the world of material things, taken as a collective whole . . . . .           | 232-233 |
| Could Matter form a determining-correspondence system in respect of its non-geometrical characteristics? . . . . . | 233     |
| There would have to be Primary Bodies. Could they be sufficiently described by their colours? . . . . .            | 234     |
| Ambiguities in this suggestion pointed out and removed . . . . .                                                   | 234-235 |



# CONTENTS

xxi

|                                                                                                                                                                                                  |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Accurate statement of the proposition which McTaggart is trying to refute . . . . .                                                                                                              | page 235-236 |
| McTaggart's abortive attempts to find a non-geometrical determining-correspondence relation for Matter . . . . .                                                                                 | 236-238      |
| Even if one could be found, the geometrical properties of the terms in the hierarchy would be independent of their positions in it; which McTaggart regards as a fatal objection . . . . .       | 238          |
| Could Matter form a determining-correspondence system in respect of its combined geometrical and non-geometrical properties? . . . . .                                                           | 238-239      |
| This must be discussed on the two hypotheses of Absolute and of Relative Space . . . . .                                                                                                         | 239          |
| Analysis and discussion of this distinction . . . . .                                                                                                                                            | 239-242      |
| Four types of theory are possible . . . . .                                                                                                                                                      | 242          |
| Each could be combined either with the view that spatial elements are punctiform or with the view that they are voluminous . . . . .                                                             | 243          |
| If they are punctiform, the question can be answered in the negative without more ado . . . . .                                                                                                  | 244          |
| McTaggart claims to answer it in the negative on every hypothesis about space and its elements . . . . .                                                                                         | 245          |
| An example to show that Matter <i>could</i> form an endless descending hierarchy of spatial parts, in which every term, however small, can be sufficiently described on a uniform plan . . . . . | 245-249      |
| This suffices to show that McTaggart's argument (whatever it may be) must be fallacious . . . . .                                                                                                | 249          |
| 1.12. <i>Temporal Extension</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                        | 249-252      |
| Even if the history of a continuant were endlessly divisible in time, it would not follow that the continuant is so . . . . .                                                                    | 249-250      |
| Temporality is part of the notion of a material thing in so far as the latter is conceived as a continuant . . . . .                                                                             | 250          |
| Since McTaggart denies the reality of Time, he cannot hold that anything is really divisible in a temporal dimension . . . . .                                                                   | 250-251      |
| Could ostensible matter and ostensible sensa be endlessly divisible in that real dimension which we misprehend as duration? . . . . .                                                            | 251          |
| McTaggart claims to prove that they could not. His argument is obscure, and seems to be irrelevant . . . . .                                                                                     | 252          |

## CHAPTER XXXIV

McTAGGART'S FORM OF MENTALISM AND ITS  
CONSEQUENCES

|                                                                                                                                                                                                            |              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. McTAGGART'S FORM OF MENTALISM . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                 | page 253-257 |
| Statement of this in six propositions . . . . .                                                                                                                                                            | 253-254      |
| Its basis is ontological, as with Leibniz, not episte-<br>mological, as with Berkeley . . . . .                                                                                                            | 254          |
| But McTaggart's determining-correspondence hier-<br>archies of selves and $\omega$ -prehensions differ funda-<br>mentally from Leibniz's organic hierarchies of<br>ruling and subordinate monads . . . . . | 254-255      |
| And McTaggart's system is atheistic, unlike Leibniz's                                                                                                                                                      | 255-256      |
| Various ways in which selves may be dissimilar . . . . .                                                                                                                                                   | 256-257      |
| 2. CONSEQUENCES OF McTAGGART'S MENTALISM . . . . .                                                                                                                                                         | 257-263      |
| 2.1. <i>General Consequences</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                 | 257-260      |
| Every primary part of the universe is a self, and con-<br>versely . . . . .                                                                                                                                | 257-258      |
| The universe cannot be a self . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                    | 258          |
| There must be more than one self . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                 | 258-259      |
| Two forms of Solipsism. Bradley's argument against<br>Solipsism is not available to McTaggart . . . . .                                                                                                    | 259          |
| A supplementary argument used by McTaggart . . . . .                                                                                                                                                       | 259-260      |
| 2.2. <i>Effect on Alternatives hitherto left open</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                            | 260-263      |
| The effects considered under eight headings . . . . .                                                                                                                                                      | 260-263      |

## CHAPTER XXXV

## OSTENSIBLE TEMPORALITY

|                                                                                                                                |         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. INDEPENDENT ACCOUNT OF THE PHENOMENOLOGY<br>OF TIME . . . . .                                                               | 265-288 |
| Intra-subjective and trans-subjective temporal facts . . . . .                                                                 | 265     |
| Duration, temporal relations, and temporal passage . . . . .                                                                   | 266-267 |
| The two former constitute the "extensive aspect",<br>and the third is the "transitory aspect" of tem-<br>poral facts . . . . . | 267     |
| 1.1. <i>The Extensive Aspect of Temporal Facts</i> . . . . .                                                                   | 267-271 |
| Spatial analogies to temporal facts . . . . .                                                                                  | 267-268 |
| In a temporal series there are two intrinsically op-<br>posite directions; in a straight line there are not                    | 268-269 |

|                                                                                                                                       |              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Spatial extension and spatial relations presuppose duration and simultaneity in the terms which they characterise . . . . .           | page 269-270 |
| These considerations reduce the value of spatial analogies even in dealing with the extensive aspect of temporal facts . . . . .      | 270-271      |
| 1.2. <i>The Transitory Aspect of Temporal Facts</i> . . . . .                                                                         | 271-281      |
| Tenses, temporal copulas, temporal adverbs, and temporal adjectives . . . . .                                                         | 271          |
| Temporal facts cannot be adequately expressed by a single non-temporal copula and various temporal predicates . . . . .               | 272          |
| 1.21. <i>Pastness, Presentness, and Futurity</i> . . . . .                                                                            | 272-277      |
| They may be compared to hotness, neutrality, and coldness under the determinable of sensible temperature . . . . .                    | 272-273      |
| The notion of event-particles . . . . .                                                                                               | 273          |
| Experiential basis of the notion of lines without breadth and points without extension . . . . .                                      | 273-274      |
| Experiential basis of the notion of event-particles . . . . .                                                                         | 274-276      |
| Strict presentness and absolutely determinate degrees of pastness or futurity can belong only to event-particles . . . . .            | 276          |
| 1.22. <i>Absolute Becoming</i> . . . . .                                                                                              | 277-281      |
| The attempt to represent temporal becoming in terms of qualitative change or motion leads to meaningless questions . . . . .          | 277          |
| And to an endless series of event-particles and time-dimensions of higher and higher orders . . . . .                                 | 277-279      |
| Mr Dunne recognises this, but fails to see that it is vicious . . . . .                                                               | 279-280      |
| Qualitative change and motion presuppose absolute becoming; hence the meaningless questions and the vicious infinite series . . . . . | 280-281      |
| 1.3. <i>The Specious Present</i> . . . . .                                                                                            | 281-288      |
| The facts which have led to the theory of the specious present . . . . .                                                              | 281-282      |
| The general premises and the argument for the theory . . . . .                                                                        | 282          |
| Presentedness and presentness . . . . .                                                                                               | 282-283      |
| Statement of the theory. The "saddle-back" form of it . . . . .                                                                       | 283-284      |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| The "wedge" form of it. This is assumed henceforth                                                                                                                                                                                                          | page 284    |
| The succession of specious presents. Any two that are<br>near enough together must overlap. Diagrammatic<br>representation . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 284-286     |
| Consequences of this . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 286-287     |
| Summary of the theory . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 287         |
| A paradoxical consequence of the theory . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 287-288     |
| Presentedness is the experiential basis of the notion<br>of strict presentness . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                    | 288         |
| <br>2. McTAGGART'S ACCOUNT OF THE PHENOMENOLOGY<br>OF TIME . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                        | <br>288-308 |
| <br>2.1. <i>B-Series and A-Series</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <br>289-291 |
| A <i>B-series</i> is a series of successive sets of mutually<br>simultaneous event-particles . . . . .                                                                                                                                                      | 289         |
| <i>A-characteristics</i> are the various degrees of pastness,<br>strict presentness, and the various degrees of<br>futurity. The terms of a <i>B-series</i> constitute an <i>A-</i><br><i>series</i> in respect of their <i>A-characteristics</i> . . . . . | 289-290     |
| The relative "motion" of a <i>B-series</i> and the series of<br><i>A-characteristics</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                          | 290-291     |
| <br>2.2. <i>Time, Change, and the two Series</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <br>291-292 |
| Are both <i>A-characteristics</i> and <i>B-relations</i> essential<br>to Time? . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                    | 291-292     |
| <br>2.21. <i>Statement of McTaggart's Doctrine</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                | <br>292     |
| <br>2.22. <i>Justification of this Account of McTaggart's Doc-</i><br><i>trine</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                | <br>292-294 |
| Did McTaggart hold that <i>B-relations</i> can be <i>defined</i><br>in terms of <i>A-characteristics</i> ? . . . . .                                                                                                                                        | 294         |
| <br>2.23. <i>McTaggart's Reasons for his Doctrine</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                             | <br>295-300 |
| It is not obvious that succession requires perpetual<br>qualitative change . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                        | 295         |
| McTaggart claims to prove that a series of terms could<br>not constitute a process of qualitative change un-<br>less each term had <i>A-characteristics</i> and changed<br>in respect of them . . . . .                                                     | 295-296     |
| His argument depends on proposing certain alter-<br>native analyses of qualitative change and rejecting<br>all but one of them . . . . .                                                                                                                    | 296         |

# CONTENTS

xxv

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| In all these alternatives he confines his attention to<br><i>events</i> ; yet <i>prima facie</i> it is <i>things</i> that change . . . . .                                                                                             | page 296-297 |
| But he considers this alternative later when criticising<br>Russell's analysis of qualitative change. State-<br>ment of Russell's analysis . . . . .                                                                                   | 297          |
| McTaggart's two objections. Both assume that his<br>original list of alternative analyses was exhaustive;<br>so each is an <i>ignoratio elenchi</i> . . . . .                                                                          | 298          |
| Was McTaggart justified in rejecting all but one of<br>his own alternatives? His argument rests on the<br>principle that, if <i>X</i> ever precedes <i>Y</i> , it <i>always</i> does<br>so by the same amount. Is this true? . . . . . | 298-299      |
| Only in a sense in which it is consistent with events<br>coming to be and passing away. It is therefore<br>useless for his purpose . . . . .                                                                                           | 299          |
| He unwittingly transferred to <i>events</i> and their tem-<br>poral relations certain notions which are applicable<br>only to <i>timeless</i> entities or to <i>continuants</i> . . . . .                                              | 300          |
| 2.24. <i>Restatement of the Position</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                     | 300-308      |
| The present suggestion is that <i>B</i> -relations are either<br>defined in terms of <i>A</i> -characteristics or founded<br>upon differences in respect of <i>A</i> -characteristics . . . . .                                        | 300-302      |
| This theory involves treating temporal becoming as a<br>case of qualitative change. This leads to absurdities;<br>but McTaggart might admit this and use it as an<br>argument against Time . . . . .                                   | 302-303      |
| It would be refuted if, as some hold, <i>A</i> -characteristics<br>can be defined in terms of <i>B</i> -relations. Sketch of a<br>suggested way of doing this . . . . .                                                                | 303-304      |
| This method, as stated, is open to an obvious criti-<br>cism; but it can be modified to meet this . . . . .                                                                                                                            | 304-305      |
| But it still involves a temporal copula or tense-<br>differences . . . . .                                                                                                                                                             | 305-307      |
| Or else it assumes that all events "co-exist" in some<br>mysterious <i>non-temporal</i> sense . . . . .                                                                                                                                | 307          |
| And it fails to do justice to the transitory aspect of<br>temporal facts . . . . .                                                                                                                                                     | 307-308      |
| So McTaggart seems to be right in holding that <i>A</i> -<br>characteristics are an irreducible factor in the<br>notion of Time and Change . . . . .                                                                                   | 308          |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                  |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 3. McTAGGART'S ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REALITY OF TIME . . . . .                                                                                                                                   | page 309-319 |
| 3.1. <i>The Main Argument</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                          | 309-317      |
| Statement of the argument in five steps. A-characteristics involve a contradiction, and any attempt to avoid this involves a vicious infinite regress . . . . .                                  | 309-313      |
| The fourth step is very obscure. Attempt to restate it clearly . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 310-312      |
| 3.1.1. <i>Criticism of the Main Argument</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                           | 313-317      |
| There is really no contradiction to be avoided, and therefore no need to start on an infinite regress in order to avoid one . . . . .                                                            | 313-314      |
| The regress occurs because McTaggart insists on trying to translate temporal statements into statements with <i>non-temporal</i> copulas and temporal predicates . . . . .                       | 314-315      |
| We may reduce the number of temporal copulas to one by using temporal predicates, but we cannot get rid of them altogether . . . . .                                                             | 315-316      |
| Analysis of "statements about past events" and "statements about future events" . . . . .                                                                                                        | 316          |
| The fallacy in McTaggart's argument is comparable to that in the Ontological Argument . . . . .                                                                                                  | 316-317      |
| 3.2. <i>The Subsidiary Argument</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                    | 317-319      |
| A-characteristics are relational properties, and their relata cannot be events or moments . . . . .                                                                                              | 317          |
| It is difficult to conceive of any term which could be a relatum of the required kind . . . . .                                                                                                  | 318          |
| At this point there is a certain analogy between McTaggart's theory and the theory of Russell's which he has rejected . . . . .                                                                  | 318-319      |
| 4. McTAGGART'S USE OF THE SPECIOUS PRESENT . . . . .                                                                                                                                             | 319-323      |
| If real presentness belongs only to instantaneous terms, the finite duration of the specious present entails that everyone is under a constant temporal delusion . . . . .                       | 319-320      |
| If it belongs to terms of short finite duration, the same fact entails that there is widespread temporal delusion unless the specious presents of all persons are of the same duration . . . . . | 320-321      |
| McTaggart thinks that this makes his denial of temporal characteristics less paradoxical than it would otherwise be . . . . .                                                                    | 321          |
| This opinion seems to be mistaken . . . . .                                                                                                                                                      | 322-323      |



BOOK VIII

THE REAL FOUNDATION OF TEMPORAL  
APPEARANCES

SECTION A  
TIME AND ERROR

Argument of Book VIII, Section A . . . . page 325-327

CHAPTER XXXVI

GENERAL REMARKS ON ERROR

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. THERE IS BOTH VERIDICAL COGNITION AND ERROR                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 329-331 |
| The statement "I believe that there are no true beliefs" is, on one interpretation, meaningless, and, on another, self-refuting . . . .                                                                                                                             | 329-330 |
| The fact that people have believed there to be error entails that there is error . . . .                                                                                                                                                                            | 331     |
| 2. THE NOTION OF "PHENOMENAL TRUTH" . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 331-332 |
| What is only "phenomenally true" is not true at all                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 332     |
| 3. MISPREHENSION . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 332-340 |
| Since all cogitation is prehension, all error is misprehension . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                            | 332     |
| McTaggart admits that, <i>prima facie</i> , the notion of misprehension is barely intelligible . . . .                                                                                                                                                              | 333     |
| A collection of seven passages in which McTaggart tries to show that misprehension, within certain strict limits, is possible . . . . .                                                                                                                             | 333-337 |
| Detailed criticism of this deferred to Chapter XLIII                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 337     |
| McTaggart's general principles seem to be inconsistent with the kind and amount of misprehension required by his system . . . . .                                                                                                                                   | 338-339 |
| All our everyday prehensions are erroneous in so far as they present their objects as temporal. Some of our everyday ostensible judgments are perfectly correct. There is less error <i>in</i> the latter, but more introspective error <i>about</i> them . . . . . | 339     |

### CHAPTER XXXVII ERROR AND *C*-SERIES

|                                                                                                                                                      |              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. THE OBJECTS OF OSTENSIBLE <i>r</i> -PREHENSIONS ARE<br>PREHENDED AS TEMPORAL . . . . .                                                            | page 341-344 |
| Some mystics have claimed toprehend certain objects<br>as timeless. McTaggart's attempt to explain this<br>away . . . . .                            | 341-342      |
| All <i>r</i> -prehensions appear as temporal when intro-<br>spected, and their objects appear to be simultaneous<br>with them . . . . .              | 342-343      |
| Some mystics would deny the first proposition.<br>McTaggart's attempt to prove that they would be<br>wrong . . . . .                                 | 343          |
| Any attempt to connect Error in general with the<br>illusion of Time must connect Error with <i>C</i> -series                                        | 344          |
| 2. THE PLURALITY OF CO-EXISTENT <i>C</i> -SERIES . . . . .                                                                                           | 344-346      |
| There must be as many primary <i>C</i> -series as there are<br>selves. But it may be possible to construct a<br>neutral series out of them . . . . . | 344-346      |

### CHAPTER XXXVIII NECESSARY CONDITIONS OF ANY THEORY OF ERROR AND *C*-SERIES

|                                     |     |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| The first four conditions . . . . . | 347 |
| The next three conditions . . . . . | 348 |
| The next three conditions . . . . . | 349 |
| The eleventh condition . . . . .    | 350 |

### CHAPTER XXXIX STATEMENT OF THE THEORY OF *C*-SERIES

|                                                                                                                                                               |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF SELVES AND OF $\omega$ -PRE-<br>HENSIONS . . . . .                                                                                   | 351-355 |
| The simplest possible determining-correspondence<br>hierarchy, with two selves as primary parts, taken<br>as typical . . . . .                                | 352     |
| Diagrammatic representation of this on the assump-<br>tion that the terms have another dimension beside<br>the determining-correspondence dimension . . . . . | 353     |

# CONTENTS

xxix

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| If the terms are divided in a second dimension, they must be divisible therein into <i>simple</i> parts . . .                                                                                                                                                        | page 354 |
| Empirical facts suggesting that the history of a self is two-dimensional . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                   | 354-355  |
| 2. THE NATURE OF $r$ -PREHENSIONS AND THEIR RELATION TO $\omega$ -PREHENSIONS . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                              | 355-360  |
| A Fragmentary Part of an $\omega$ -prehension is a part which is co-extensive with it in the first dimension but less extensive in the second. Every $r$ -prehension is a fragmentary part of the $\omega$ -prehension in the same self of the same object . . . . . | 356      |
| Diagrammatic representation of this . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 357      |
| 2.1. <i>The Notion of "States of Prehension"</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 358-360  |
| This is introduced in order to deal with the error of prehending as undifferentiated an object which is in fact differentiated . . . . .                                                                                                                             | 358      |
| A state of prehension whose object is $O$ is either a prehension of $O$ or a prehension-component corresponding to $O$ . . . . .                                                                                                                                     | 359      |
| Some fragmentary parts of an $\omega$ -prehension are only prehension-components corresponding to the object of that $\omega$ -prehension . . . . .                                                                                                                  | 360      |
| 3. INTER-RELATIONS OF FRAGMENTARY PARTS OF THE SAME $\omega$ -PREHENSION . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                   | 360-362  |
| Of any two $r$ -states of prehension, which are co-extensive in the first dimension with the same $\omega$ -prehension, one is wholly contained in, without exhausting, the other in the second dimension . . . . .                                                  | 360-361  |
| Diagrammatic representation of this . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 361      |
| Some fragmentary parts of an $\omega$ -prehension are $r$ -states of prehension; the rest are residues . . . . .                                                                                                                                                     | 361-362  |
| The $r$ -states of prehension which are fragmentary parts of a given $\omega$ -prehension form a set of Chinese boxes in the second dimension, with the $\omega$ -prehension as the most inclusive box . . . . .                                                     | 362      |
| 4. SOME PROPERTIES OF INCLUSION-SERIES . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 362-366  |
| 4.1. <i>General Remarks on Series</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 362-364  |
| Discrete and compact series . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 362-363  |
| Double-ended, single-ended, and unended series . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 363      |

|                                                                                                                                                   |              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Upper and lower limits. Doubly-bounded, singly-bounded, and unbounded series . . . . .                                                            | page 363-364 |
| Series with finite, and series with infinite, numbers of terms . . . . .                                                                          | 364          |
| 4.2. <i>Application to Inclusion-Series</i> . . . . .                                                                                             | 364-366      |
| Every inclusion-series has a maximal end-term which is an $\omega$ -prehension; but it may have no minimal end-term . . . . .                     | 364          |
| McTaggart says that an inclusion-series <i>may</i> have a finite number of terms, but <i>must</i> have "non-entity" for its lower limit . . . . . | 364-365      |
| This is self-contradictory, if "limit" is used properly. Explanation of McTaggart's meaning . . . . .                                             | 365          |
| An inclusion-series without its maximal end-term is a "misprehension-series". It has both an upper and a lower bound . . . . .                    | 365-366      |
| 5. CORRELATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT INCLUSION-SERIES . . . . .                                                                                       | 366-372      |
| The maximal end-terms of any two inclusion-series correspond, by definition; so do the minimal end-terms, if they exist . . . . .                 | 367          |
| Criterion for the correspondence of intermediate terms in two inclusion-series which both have minimal end-terms . . . . .                        | 367-368      |
| The criterion gives consistent results when applied to the end-terms . . . . .                                                                    | 368          |
| Extension to the case of two series which have no minimal end-terms . . . . .                                                                     | 369          |
| Extension to the case of two series, one of which has, and the other has not, a minimal end-term . . . . .                                        | 370          |
| 5.1. <i>Some Comments on the above Test for Correspondence</i> . . . . .                                                                          | 370-372      |
| Four cases in which the terms of two inclusion-series would fail to fall into corresponding pairs . . . . .                                       | 370-371      |
| Necessary conditions for complete correlation . . . . .                                                                                           | 371-372      |
| McTaggart's tacit assumptions . . . . .                                                                                                           | 373          |
| 6. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY INCLUSION-SERIES . . . . .                                                                                               | 372-377      |
| So far we have considered only inclusion-series whose maximal end-terms are $\omega$ -prehensions. These may be called "Secondary" . . . . .      | 372-373      |

# CONTENTS

xxxi

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Obscurities in the notion of Primary Inclusion-series                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | page 373 |
| Attempt to elucidate this notion in the light of certain passages in <i>The Nature of Existence</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                 | 373-375  |
| Every term in a primary inclusion-series is a state of prehension in a self of that self's differentiating group taken as a total object . . . . .                                                                                                                            | 375      |
| Diagrammatic representation of this . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 375-377  |
| Summary. A paradox remains, but it is a clear consequence of McTaggart's principles . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                 | 377      |
| 7. INCLUSION-SERIES, <i>C</i> -SERIES, AND OSTENSIBLE <i>B</i> -SERIES . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                              | 378-385  |
| A <i>C</i> -series is defined as any series which can be mis-<br>prehended as a <i>B</i> -series. Any such series is an<br>inclusion-series . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 378      |
| To account for the appearance of a <i>B</i> -series two in-<br>clusion-series are needed. They may be called<br>"time-projecting" and "time-reflecting" with<br>respect to each other . . . . .                                                                               | 378-379  |
| Explanation of these notions . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 379      |
| Each term in a time-projecting series is a state of<br>prehension whose object consists of <i>every</i> term in the<br>correlated time-reflecting series. It is therefore in-<br>ternally differentiated into factors which correspond<br>one-to-one to these terms . . . . . | 380-381  |
| Diagrammatic representation of this . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 381      |
| The notation for this explained . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 381-382  |
| Any pre-maximal term in a time-projecting series<br>presents the corresponding term in the time-<br>reflecting series as present; it presents less inclusive<br>terms as past, and more inclusive terms as future . . . . .                                                   | 382      |
| The maximal end-term of an inclusion-series is not<br>time-projecting. And it is presented as future by<br>every term which presents it as temporal . . . . .                                                                                                                 | 382-383  |
| All the above remarks apply equally when both series<br>are in the same self . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                        | 383      |
| Ostensible prehensions and their objects occupy cor-<br>responding positions in their respective inclusion-<br>series . . . . .                                                                                                                                               | 384      |
| Removal of an apparent objection to McTaggart's<br>doctrine . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 384-385  |
| 8. SUMMARY OF McTAGGART'S DOCTRINE . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 385-390  |

## CHAPTER XL

THE COMPLETE CORRECTNESS OF  $\omega$ -PREHENSIONS

|                                                                                                                                                              |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Remarks on the tests available for such a theory as McTaggart's . . . . .                                                                                    | page 391-393 |
| THE CORRECTNESS OF $\omega$ -PREHENSIONS . . . . .                                                                                                           | 393-397      |
| Recapitulation of results already reached on this question . . . . .                                                                                         | 393          |
| A general principle about prehension laid down by McTaggart . . . . .                                                                                        | 394          |
| If it be accepted, and combined with the previous results, the extent to which an $\omega$ -prehension could mispresent its object is very limited . . . . . | 394-395      |
| Attempt to prove that an $\omega$ -prehension could not mispresent its complete object, or any fragmentary part of it, as temporal . . . . .                 | 395-397      |

## CHAPTER XLI

THE PARTIAL INCORRECTNESS OF  $r$ -PREHENSIONS

|                                                                                                                                                                                            |         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Five questions raised about $r$ -prehensions . . . . .                                                                                                                                     | 398     |
| 1. NO $r$ -PREHENSION IS COMPLETELY CORRECT . . . . .                                                                                                                                      | 398-412 |
| Statement of McTaggart's argument. It is extremely obscure . . . . .                                                                                                                       | 399-400 |
| What does he mean by "separate" prehensions? He probably means "numerically diverse" prehensions . . . . .                                                                                 | 400     |
| What does he mean by a prehension "prehending itself"? . . . . .                                                                                                                           | 401     |
| Whatever he may mean by it, his argument will not prove his conclusion without assuming a certain premise which he never justifies . . . . .                                               | 401-402 |
| 1.1. <i>In what Sense can a Prehension "prehend itself"?</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                     | 402-412 |
| McTaggart suddenly asserts that every term in an inclusion-series prehends <i>itself</i> and the other terms in <i>its own</i> series . . . . .                                            | 402     |
| The phrase " $X$ prehends $Y$ " has so far been used by McTaggart in two senses. In neither of these is it sensible to say of a <i>prehension</i> that it prehends <i>itself</i> . . . . . | 403     |
| Attempt to interpret " $X$ prehends $X$ ", where $X$ is a prehension, by analogy with the meaning which McTaggart attaches to it when $X$ is a self . . . . .                              | 403-405 |



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| This requires that the self in which the prehension occurs should be self-conscious. This is in accord with McTaggart's statements . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | page 405-406 |
| It also requires that the prehension shall be a term in a <i>primary</i> inclusion-series or in a <i>purely reflexive</i> secondary inclusion-series. This will not suffice for McTaggart's purpose . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                               | 406-407      |
| Another interpretation suggested . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 407          |
| It leads to results which agree with all McTaggart's relevant statements . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 407-411      |
| If this is what he meant, he expressed himself in a most misleading way. And the principle, thus interpreted, is not obviously true . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 411-412      |
| 2. THE SECOND QUESTION ABOUT <i>r</i> -PREHENSIONS . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 412-413      |
| A pre-maximal term in a time-projecting series cannot present some of the terms in the time-reflecting series as temporal and others as non-temporal . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 412-413      |
| 3. THE THIRD AND FOURTH QUESTIONS ABOUT <i>r</i> -PREHENSIONS . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 413-414      |
| If <i>one</i> pre-maximal term in a time-projecting series presents the terms of a time-reflecting series as temporal, then <i>every</i> term in it will do likewise. And, if two time-projecting series in different selves have a common time-reflecting series, this cannot be presented as temporal by all the terms of one and as non-temporal by all the terms of the other . . . . . | 413-414      |
| 4. MISPREHENSION REQUIRES REFLEXIVE SELF-PREHENSION . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 414-416      |
| The argument depends on the principle that every <i>r</i> -prehension is, <i>inter alia</i> , a prehension of itself. It is unintelligible as stated . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 415          |
| Restatement of the argument. The interpretation of this principle proposed on p. 407 makes the argument intelligible and valid . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 415-416      |

## CHAPTER XLII

### THE EXISTENCE AND NATURE OF THE *C*-DIMENSION

|                                                                                                                                                                        |         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. GROUNDS FOR POSTULATING A <i>C</i> -DIMENSION . . . . .                                                                                                             | 417-420 |
| The terms of a <i>C</i> -series in a self could not be that self's various $\omega$ -prehensions arranged in an order . . . . .                                        | 417-418 |
| For a self has only one $\omega$ -prehension of any object, whilst, <i>sub specie temporis</i> , it can cogitate the same object on many different occasions . . . . . | 418-419 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                           |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Moreover, it is plain that our ordinary cogitations are very unlike $\omega$ -prehensions . . . . .                                                                                       | page 419 |
| And one's field of consciousness seems to have the two dimensions of duration and breadth, and the determining-correspondence dimension is used up in accounting for the latter . . . . . | 419-420  |
| 2. THE INCLUSION-RELATION . . . . .                                                                                                                                                       | 420-425  |
| Certain alternative suggestions as to the generating relation of <i>C</i> -series rejected . . . . .                                                                                      | 420-421  |
| 2.1. <i>McTaggart's positive Argument</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                       | 421-425  |
| No <i>two r</i> -states of prehension in one self of a given object can be members of <i>any one</i> set of parts of the $\omega$ -prehension in that self of that object . . . .         | 421-422  |
| The argument for this rests on a general principle which McTaggart thinks self-evident . . . . .                                                                                          | 422-423  |
| Any two <i>r</i> -prehensions in one self of a given object must have a part in common. This follows immediately . . . . .                                                                | 423-424  |
| Of any two <i>r</i> -prehensions in one self of a given object one must be wholly contained in, without exhausting, the other . . . . .                                                   | 424      |
| This conclusion does not follow. Diagrammatic illustration of the fallacy . . . . .                                                                                                       | 424-425  |
| 3. THE QUANTITATIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF FRAGMENTARY PARTS . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 425-446  |
| 3.1. <i>McTaggart's Theory of Magnitude</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                     | 426-435  |
| McTaggart's definition of "Extensive Magnitude". He assumes that any magnitude which is not extensive, in this sense, is intensive . . . . .                                              | 426      |
| Ambiguities in the term "magnitude". Magnitude and Quantum . . . . .                                                                                                                      | 426-427  |
| Ambiguities in the phrase "difference between two magnitudes". Difference of determinate value and arithmetical difference of measure . . . . .                                           | 427-428  |
| On McTaggart's definitions numbers would be extensive quanta . . . . .                                                                                                                    | 428      |
| "Comprehensiveness" of classes. The residue of a class without one of its sub-classes . . . . .                                                                                           | 428-429  |
| The residue of an extended whole without one of its extended parts . . . . .                                                                                                              | 429-430  |

# CONTENTS

xxxv

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Amended definition of "extensive magnitude". It involves the notion of adjunction of parts to form a whole . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                      | page 430-431 |
| Two quanta of the same kind have a difference, in the sense of a residue, only when both are strictly extensive or comprehensive, and when certain further conditions are fulfilled . . . . .                                                                                             | 431          |
| McTaggart assumes that <i>any</i> two quanta of the same kind have a difference, in the sense of a residue, and that this residue is always an extensive magnitude in his sense . . . . .                                                                                                 | 432          |
| This principle, if interpreted literally, is meaningless as applied to intensive quanta . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                         | 432-433      |
| If and only if certain complicated causal conditions are fulfilled, it can be given a highly Pickwickian meaning . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                | 433-434      |
| McTaggart's mistake probably arose from a confusion about <i>numerical measures</i> and their <i>arithmetical</i> sums and differences . . . . .                                                                                                                                          | 434-435      |
| 3.2. <i>Application to Fragmentary Parts</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 435-441      |
| McTaggart's attempt to prove that the terms of a <i>C</i> -series are purely intensive quanta . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                   | 435-436      |
| The first step is a mere platitude . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 436          |
| The second depends on ignoring the fact that one and the same term may be an extensive quantum in respect of one characteristic and an intensive quantum in respect of another . . . . .                                                                                                  | 436-437      |
| The fallacy probably arose from failing to distinguish magnitudes and quanta . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 437-438      |
| 3.21. <i>The Introduction of D-Series</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 438-441      |
| A <i>D</i> -series is a series consisting of the increments from the lower bound of a <i>C</i> -series to its successive terms, arranged in order. McTaggart claims, unjustifiably, to have proved that there must be such a series and that its terms will be extensive quanta . . . . . | 438-439      |
| McTaggart asserts that, if a <i>C</i> -series has a minimal end-term, this will also be the first term of the corresponding <i>D</i> -series. This is impossible unless the same term can be both an extensive and an intensive quantum . . . . .                                         | 439          |
| If it is true, subsequent terms of the <i>C</i> -series must equally be identified with subsequent terms of the <i>D</i> -series . . . . .                                                                                                                                                | 439-440      |

|                                                                                                                                                                                            |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| The identification of the first terms is invalid. It rests on a confusion between a <i>zero magnitude</i> and the <i>number nought</i> . . . . .                                           | page 440-441 |
| 3.3. <i>Restatement of the Theory</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                            | 441-443      |
| We must ascribe an extensive magnitude to all the terms of any <i>C-series</i> ; and we may, if necessary, ascribe an intensive magnitude to them also. Geometrical illustration . . . . . | 441-442      |
| The residues will have the same kind of extensive magnitude as the terms of the <i>C-series</i> . . . .                                                                                    | 443          |
| 3.4. <i>The Nature of the Extensive Magnitude</i> . . .                                                                                                                                    | 443-445      |
| McTaggart suggests that it is something which might be called "Amount of Prehension" . . .                                                                                                 | 444          |
| He admits that it is difficult to illustrate this notion                                                                                                                                   | 444-445      |
| It is safer to use some neutral name such as " <i>C-extension</i> " . . . . .                                                                                                              | 445          |
| 3.5. <i>Are all Terms in a C-series States of Prehension?</i>                                                                                                                              | 445-446      |
| McTaggart's attempt to prove that they are by reference to "amount of prehension" . . . .                                                                                                  | 445-446      |
| Criticism of the argument . . . . .                                                                                                                                                        | 446          |

## CHAPTER XLIII

## COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONDITIONS

|                                                                                                                                                                                             |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| McTaggart's final attempt to reconcile the existence of misprehension with our certainty that every prehension is correct at the time when it is made                                       | 447-448 |
| It is highly condensed. Attempt to state the principle fully and accurately in terms of <i>C-series</i> .                                                                                   | 448-449 |
| It seems to be incompatible with the amount and kind of misprehension which McTaggart's theory requires                                                                                     | 449     |
| And with certain explicit statements which he makes                                                                                                                                         | 449-450 |
| McTaggart's doctrine on this vitally important point is utterly unsatisfactory . . . . .                                                                                                    | 450     |
| McTaggart uses his theory of prehension-components to explain the fact that one often prehends objects as undifferentiated which must, if the theory be true, be endlessly differentiated . | 451-452 |
| The theory can explain apparent oscillations in the clearness with which a self prehends its total cogitative field . . . . .                                                               | 453-454 |

## CONTENTS

xxxvii

|                                                                                                                             |                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Apparently dreamless sleep is an extreme case of this                                                                       | <i>page</i> 454 |
| The theory can explain apparent oscillation in the extent of a self's cogitative field . . . . .                            | 454-455         |
| And apparent shifting of attention from one phase to another in the history of a continuously contemplated object . . . . . | 455             |
| And apparent oscillation in the clearness with which a self cogitates a continuously contemplated object                    | 456             |
| Satisfaction of the remaining conditions . . . . .                                                                          | 456-457         |
| An analogy to Leibniz's theory of monads . . . . .                                                                          | 457             |

## CHAPTER XLIV

### OSTENSIBLE SENSА AND OSTENSIBLE MATTER

|                                                                                                                                                                                               |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| The theory is consistent with the fact that we mis-<br>prehend certain particulars as sensа and that we<br>perceptually accept certain particulars as material<br>things and events . . . . . | 458-459 |
| An apparent epistemological difficulty raised and<br>removed . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 459-460 |

## CHAPTER XLV

### OSTENSIBLE PREHENSIONS

|                                                                                                                                                                                        |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Even those experiences which appear correctly to<br>introspection as prehensions appear delusively in<br>certain other respects . . . . .                                              | 461     |
| McTaggart claims to reconcile the existence of these<br>delusive appearances with his general theory . . . . .                                                                         | 461-462 |
| The range of ostensible prehension is much narrower<br>than that of ostensibly non-prehensive cogitations                                                                              | 462     |
| So it is likely that there is a closer connexion between<br>subject and object when the former ostensibly pre-<br>hends the latter than in other cases . . . . .                       | 462-463 |
| On the theory of <i>C</i> -series this is so. For an ostensible<br>prehension and its object occupy almost corre-<br>sponding positions in their respective <i>C</i> -series . . . . . | 463     |
| Two questions raised and deferred to the next chapter                                                                                                                                  | 463-464 |

## CHAPTER XLVI

## OSTENSIBLE JUDGMENTS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Division of the subject . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                           | page 465 |
| 1. GENERAL ACCOUNT OF JUDGMENTS AND PREHENSIONS . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                   | 465-468  |
| If there are no judgments, introspection is very misleading. But why should it not be? . . . . .                                                                                                                            | 465      |
| There is no inconsistency in making the ostensible judgment that no experience is really a judgment . . . . .                                                                                                               | 465-466  |
| In some cases an ostensible judgment and an ostensible prehension supply precisely the same information in different ways . . . . .                                                                                         | 466      |
| Some ostensible judgments are completely true, whilst no <i>r</i> -prehensions are completely correct. Yet each of the former must be one of the latter . . . . .                                                           | 466-467  |
| The division of ostensible judgments into ostensible <i>p</i> -judgments and ostensible <i>u</i> -judgments . . . . .                                                                                                       | 467-468  |
| 2. CAN OSTENSIBLE <i>p</i> -JUDGMENTS BE PREHENSIONS? . . . . .                                                                                                                                                             | 468-475  |
| Not unless a certain pair of conditions are fulfilled . . . . .                                                                                                                                                             | 468      |
| 2.1. <i>The first Condition</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                   | 468-471  |
| Likenesses and unlikenesses between ostensible <i>p</i> -judgments and ostensible prehensions . . . . .                                                                                                                     | 468      |
| In spite of the unlikenesses, all the information supplied by the former could be supplied by the latter. This is the first condition . . . . .                                                                             | 468-469  |
| Even if this is true of ostensible <i>p</i> -judgments about ostensibly prehended particulars, what right has McTaggart to extend it to such judgments about particulars which are cogitated only by description? . . . . . | 469-470  |
| It is difficult to believe that one and the same experience can be prehended by its owner correctly as a prehension and incorrectly as a <i>p</i> -judgment . . . . .                                                       | 470-471  |
| 2.2. <i>The second Condition</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                  | 471-475  |
| "Propositional content" and "prehensional content" distinguished . . . . .                                                                                                                                                  | 471      |
| When a prehension is misprehended as a judgment the propositional content which it is prehended as having always omits part of the prehensional content which it really has . . . . .                                       | 471-472  |



# CONTENTS

xxxix

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| This principle is supposed to explain the existence of ostensible <i>p</i> -judgments which are perfectly true . . . . .                                                                                                               | page 472 |
| Three cases in which a person has simultaneously an ostensible prehension of an object and an ostensible judgment about it . . . . .                                                                                                   | 473      |
| The case in which the object is ostensibly prehended as having a characteristic which it is ostensibly judged not to have . . . . .                                                                                                    | 473-474  |
| Criticism of McTaggart's explanation of this case . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                            | 474      |
| McTaggart's general explanation of the existence of completely true ostensible <i>p</i> -judgments assumes a very mechanical view of the nature of those ostensible prehensions which are partly correct and partly delusive . . . . . | 474-475  |
| An alternative theory proposed and rejected by McTaggart . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                     | 475      |
| 3. CAN OSTENSIBLE <i>u</i> -JUDGMENTS BE PREHENSIONS?                                                                                                                                                                                  | 475-481  |
| Can all the information supplied by ostensible <i>u</i> -judgments be supplied by prehensions? This is the essential question here . . . . .                                                                                           | 475-476  |
| Every <i>u</i> -judgment asserts or denies of a certain one characteristic that it conveys a certain other characteristic . . . . .                                                                                                    | 476      |
| Two cases distinguished . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 476-477  |
| The case where both characteristics have been ostensibly manifested to the maker of the ostensible judgment . . . . .                                                                                                                  | 477      |
| McTaggart's explanation depends on the assumption that a characteristic can be prehended as conveying another characteristic . . . . .                                                                                                 | 477-478  |
| The facts on which McTaggart bases this assumption . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                           | 478      |
| It is doubtful whether they will account for the generality and the necessity of <i>u</i> -judgments . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 478-479  |
| The case where one at least of the characteristics has never been ostensibly manifested to the maker of the ostensible judgment . . . . .                                                                                              | 479      |
| Two preliminary comments . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 479-480  |
| McTaggart's attempted explanation . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                            | 480      |
| It is probably the best defence that can be made. But his theory fails to account for the positive functions specific to thinking as opposed to prehending . . . . .                                                                   | 481      |

|                                                                                                                            |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 4. OSTENSIBLE JUDGMENTS AND ENDLESS DIVISIBILITY                                                                           | page 482 |
| McTaggart's question rests on confusing the two senses of "judgment", viz., act of judging and <i>judicabile</i> . . . . . | 482      |

# CHAPTER XLVII

## OSTENSIBLE INFERENCE

|                                                                                                 |         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| McTaggart's definition of "inference". It involves two conditions . . . . .                     | 483-484 |
| The first is obviously compatible with his general theory . . . . .                             | 484-485 |
| The second condition. Entailment of an ostensible judgment by a combination of others . . . . . | 485     |
| Attempt to define this in terms of the theory of C-series . . . . .                             | 485-486 |
| Illustrations from Euclid's <i>Elements</i> . . . . .                                           | 486     |
| There remain positive features in inference which are not present in prehension . . . . .       | 486-487 |

# CHAPTER XLVIII

## OTHER OSTENSIBLE FORMS OF COGITATION

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. OSTENSIBLE SUPPOSING . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                              | 488-491 |
| McTaggart holds that, when a prehension is mis-<br>prehended as a state of supposing, the element of<br>conviction (which would be retained if it were<br>misprehended as a judgment) is omitted . . . . .     | 488-489 |
| He treats this <i>psychological</i> omission as if it were a<br>mere extension of the <i>epistemological</i> omission<br>which is involved in ostensible judgment. Really<br>they are utterly unlike . . . . . | 489     |
| McTaggart asserts that fantastic ostensible sup-<br>positions are elements in ostensible judgments<br>which have actually been made . . . . .                                                                  | 490     |
| Restatement of the theory . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                            | 491     |
| 2. OSTENSIBLE AWARENESS OF CHARACTERISTICS . . . . .                                                                                                                                                           | 491-492 |
| Here a prehension is still further misprehended, so<br>that it no longer appears to have even propositional<br>content . . . . .                                                                               | 492     |

# CONTENTS

xli

|                                                                                                           |              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 3. OSTENSIBLE IMAGING . . . . .                                                                           | page 492-494 |
| McTaggart's mistaken analysis of ostensible imaging<br>here involves him in needless difficulties . . . . | 492-493      |
| He claims to bring ostensible remembering under this<br>head . . . . .                                    | 493-494      |

## CHAPTER XLIX

### MAXIMAL AND PRE-MAXIMAL EMOTION AND VOLITION

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Division of emotions and volitions into the $\omega$ -kind and<br>the $r$ -kind . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 495-496 |
| 1. $\omega$ -VOLITIONS AND $\omega$ -EMOTIONS . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 496-503 |
| Can we be sure that there are any? . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 496     |
| McTaggart's attempt to prove that all non-reflexive<br>first-grade $\omega$ -prehensions are erotically toned . .                                                                                                                                                                                         | 497-498 |
| Criticism of the argument. We have no experience<br>in this life of loving <i>selves</i> ; what we love are<br><i>ensouled organisms</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                        | 498     |
| If McTaggart's conclusion be accepted, it follows that<br>all $\omega$ -prehensions are emotions either of love, or of<br>self-reverence, or of complacency, or of affection, as<br>the case may be . . . . .                                                                                             | 499-500 |
| If $\omega$ -prehensions are desires, they cannot be frus-<br>trated desires . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 500     |
| If an $\omega$ -prehension were a fulfilled aversion, there<br>could be no $\omega$ -wish that its object should be different .                                                                                                                                                                           | 500-501 |
| McTaggart's attempt to prove that all $\omega$ -prehensions<br>are volitions . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 501-502 |
| It rests on his conclusion that all first-grade non-<br>reflexive $\omega$ -prehensions are emotions of love . . .                                                                                                                                                                                        | 502     |
| All McTaggart's conclusions about $\omega$ -volition depend<br>on the very doubtful premise that to cognise $X$ with<br>aversion is simply to suppose with acquiescence the<br>non-existence of $X$ or its existence with other<br>characteristics than those which it is cognised as<br>having . . . . . | 502-503 |
| 2. PECULIARITIES OF $\omega$ -EMOTIONS . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 503-506 |
| McTaggart's five reasons for holding that $\omega$ -love must<br>be more intense than $r$ -love . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 503-504 |
| Criticisms. Almost all the known characteristics<br>which make us love a person are delusive, if<br>McTaggart is right . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                          | 504-505 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| The "kite-string fallacy". McTaggart commits it flagrantly in this argument . . . . .                                                                                                                                                      | page 505 |
| Since no human being has any positive idea of timeless existence and experience, we cannot tell whether the realisation of our eternity will compensate for the loss of those goods which are bound up with the illusion of time . . . . . | 506      |
| 3. PECULIARITIES OF $r$ -EMOTIONS . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                | 506-508  |
| Enumeration of various evil emotions and volitions which cannot exist at the $\omega$ -stage . . . . .                                                                                                                                     | 506-507  |
| There might be $\omega$ -humility and $\omega$ -disapproval, but it is doubtful whether there could be $\omega$ -loyalty to a group of persons . . . . .                                                                                   | 508      |
| 4. THE THEORY OF $C$ -SERIES AND THE FACTS ABOUT VOLITION AND EMOTION . . . . .                                                                                                                                                            | 508-513  |
| Though all $r$ -states of prehension are parts of $\omega$ -prehensions, many of the former seem to have emotional qualities which could not belong to any of the latter . . . . .                                                         | 508-509  |
| Three reasons why this raises no insuperable difficulty                                                                                                                                                                                    | 509-510  |
| A similar problem arises over $r$ -volitions, and can be solved in a similar way . . . . .                                                                                                                                                 | 510      |
| We have no right to assume that an $r$ -state of prehension which is misprehended in its cogitative aspects really has the emotional quality which it seems to have . . . . .                                                              | 510-511  |
| McTaggart's attempt to show that this need not lead us to doubt that $A$ loves $B$ , if he seems to himself to do so . . . . .                                                                                                             | 511-512  |
| The argument is unsatisfactory. A better (but not conclusive) argument substituted for it . . . . .                                                                                                                                        | 512      |
| McTaggart's attempt to show that we can still make reasonably probable estimates of a person's moral character and dispositions . . . . .                                                                                                  | 512-513  |

# ANALYTIC TABLE OF CONTENTS

## VOLUME II. PART II

### BOOK VIII

#### THE REAL FOUNDATION OF TEMPORAL APPEARANCES

##### SECTION B TIME AND ETERNITY

Argument of Book VIII, Section B . . . . . page 517-518

##### CHAPTER L

###### DIRECTION IN *C*-SERIES AND IN OSTENSIBLE *B*-SERIES

|                                                                                                                                                                                               |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Is "earlier than" the appearance of "less inclusive than"<br>or of "more inclusive than"? The "more important"<br>direction in each series will probably correspond . . . . .                 | 519-520 |
| 1. THE MORE IMPORTANT DIRECTION IN OSTENSIBLE<br><i>B</i> -SERIES . . . . .                                                                                                                   | 520-522 |
| Example of the two directions on the Inner Circle.<br>Here "importance" is due to extraneous considera-<br>tions, and the greater importance of "earlier than"<br>is <i>assumed</i> . . . . . | 520-521 |
| McTaggart's attempt to show that earlier-to-later is<br>the more important direction . . . . .                                                                                                | 521     |
| 2. THE MORE IMPORTANT DIRECTION IN <i>C</i> -SERIES . . . . .                                                                                                                                 | 522-526 |
| An alleged example of such a direction in a series of<br>propositions . . . . .                                                                                                               | 522-523 |
| It is doubtful whether this avoids a tacit reference to<br>time . . . . .                                                                                                                     | 523     |
| The one-sided dependence of all the rest of a <i>C</i> -series<br>on its maximal end-term makes the direction from<br>less to more inclusive the more important direction . . . . .           | 524-525 |
| The argument would be more impressive if it were<br>certain that <i>C</i> -series do not have minimal end-terms . . . . .                                                                     | 525-526 |
| An argument on these lines might have been applied<br>to primary <i>B</i> -series with some plausibility . . . . .                                                                            | 526     |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                 |              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 3. THE EMOTIONAL INFLUENCE OF PASTNESS AND FUTURITY . . . . .                                                                                                                                   | page 527-533 |
| Anticipated goods and evils have a greater emotional effect in the present, <i>caeteris paribus</i> , than remembered ones . . . . .                                                            | 527          |
| This cannot be explained by mere differences in certainty . . . . .                                                                                                                             | 527-528      |
| McTaggart cannot explain it. It remains even if his negative conclusions about Time are accepted . . . . .                                                                                      | 528          |
| 3.1. <i>The emotional Influence of Earlier and Later</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                              | 529-533      |
| The difference between coming earlier or coming later does not, in itself, modify the emotional effect of an experience . . . . .                                                               | 529          |
| It is hedonically desirable that those primary evils which are anticipated and remembered throughout life should come early and that the corresponding primary goods should come late . . . . . | 530          |
| Qualifications needed when the primary goods and evils are anticipated and remembered only during a part of a finite life . . . . .                                                             | 531-532      |
| The greater emotional significance of the future cannot be explained by the fact that it corresponds to the more inclusive end of <i>C</i> -series . . . . .                                    | 532-533      |

## CHAPTER LI

APPARENT TEMPORAL POSITION AND REAL  
*C*-POSITION

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. STATEMENT OF THE THEORY . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                 | 534-539 |
| From the $\omega$ -standpoint any term in a secondary <i>C</i> -series is prehended as a timeless state of prehension by any self who prehends it at all . . . . .                                                   | 534-535 |
| Similar remarks apply, <i>mutatis mutandis</i> , to the $\omega$ -prehension in any self of any term in a primary <i>C</i> -series . . . . .                                                                         | 535-536 |
| Prehension from the $\omega$ -standpoint of the $\omega$ -term of any <i>C</i> -series would presumably be more like our ordinary ostensible prehensions than like any other of our ostensible experiences . . . . . | 536     |
| It is therefore an appropriate <i>metaphor</i> (though no more) to compare $\omega$ -prehensions of $\omega$ -objects with ordinary ostensible prehension of objects as present . . . . .                            | 536-537 |



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| From every $r$ -standpoint any $\omega$ -term which is pre-<br>hended at all is prehended as future . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | page 537-538 |
| The $\omega$ -terms of secondary $C$ -series need not be pre-<br>hended as <i>prehensions</i> from an $r$ -standpoint, and<br>the $\omega$ -terms of primary $C$ -series are not prehended<br>as <i>selves</i> from an $r$ -standpoint . . . . .                                                                                 | 538          |
| Application to reflexive cognition from the $\omega$ - and the<br>$r$ -standpoints . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 538-539      |
| 2. COMMENTS ON THE THEORY . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 539-546      |
| We have no experience which would enable us to<br>attach a positive meaning to the term "eternal" . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 539-541      |
| The theory requires that correct and incorrect cogni-<br>tions of the same object should timelessly co-exist<br>in the same self, and that a self should timelessly<br>prehend the same object as past, as present, as<br>future, and as timeless . . . . .                                                                      | 541          |
| McTaggart might answer that this <i>prima facie</i> objec-<br>tion depends on confusing timeless co-existence<br>with temporal simultaneity . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                            | 541-542      |
| Does the theory entail that a self <i>now</i> prehends itself<br>as <i>going</i> to begin existing only at the end of future<br>time? . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                  | 542          |
| No. A self prehends now what is <i>in fact</i> itself, not as<br>a self, but as that phase of its own history which<br>will begin only at the end of future time . . . . .                                                                                                                                                       | 542-544      |
| Final restatement of the theory of reflexive self-<br>cognition. Strictly speaking, it is only the factor<br>$P_{11}^{\omega\omega}$ which presents $P_1$ as a whole to himself as<br>himself. And <i>sub specie temporis</i> $P_{11}^{\omega\omega}$ is an event<br>which will not occur until the end of future time . . . . . | 544-545      |
| Does the theory entail that we have certain experiences<br>which in fact we do not have? McTaggart's possible<br>answer . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                | 545          |
| It is difficult to see that the theory can account for<br>the transitory aspect of temporal facts . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 545-546      |
| 3. TEMPORAL METAPHORS FOR THE NON-TEMPORAL . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 547-550      |
| Any $\omega$ -term can be called "future" from any $r$ -stand-<br>point with as much truth as anything can be called<br>"future"; and any $r$ -term can be called "present"<br>or "past" from certain $r$ -standpoints with as much<br>truth as it can be called "future" from certain<br>others . . . . .                       | 547          |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                    |              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| What appears <i>sub specie temporis</i> only as future includes, as parts of itself in the <i>C</i> -dimension, everything that appears <i>sub specie temporis</i> as past or as present . . . . . | page 547-548 |
| $\omega$ -terms appear <i>sub specie temporis</i> to begin but do not appear to end . . . . .                                                                                                      | 548          |
| The attempt to identify the eternal with what appears as present is a mistake in metaphysics . . . .                                                                                               | 548-549      |
| And is liable to lead to unfortunate results in ethics .                                                                                                                                           | 549          |
| The Christian mythology, which makes Heaven an unending state beginning at the end of future time, is to be preferred . . . . .                                                                    | 549-550      |

## CHAPTER LII

### OSTENSIBLE DURATION

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN "REAL" AND "APPARENT" DURATION . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 551-554 |
| The distinction between standard and abnormal temporal appearance . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 552     |
| The suggested causes of abnormalities in temporal appearances stated and criticised . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 552-554 |
| 2. APPARENT DURATION OF INTERMEDIATE <i>C</i> -TERMS AND <i>C</i> -STRETCHES . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 554-567 |
| McTaggart asserts that every pre-maximal term in a <i>C</i> -series would appear to have <i>finite</i> duration; that anything that is prehended as having <i>divisible</i> duration must be a <i>stretch</i> of terms in a <i>C</i> -series; and that a <i>C</i> -series may be <i>compact</i> . . . . . | 554     |
| The first two propositions entail that each term of a <i>C</i> -series would appear to have a finite indivisible duration. This is barely intelligible . . . . .                                                                                                                                          | 555     |
| A further difficulty arises if <i>C</i> -series are supposed to be compact . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 555-556 |
| This could be avoided if the apparent durations of closely adjacent terms of a <i>C</i> -series overlap in accordance with a certain law . . . . .                                                                                                                                                        | 556-557 |
| Another expedient would be to assume that each term appears as an instant with temporal position but without duration . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                           | 557-558 |
| But this would lead to difficulties if <i>C</i> -series were discrete . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 558     |
| Summary of the situation . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 558-559 |

# CONTENTS

xlvi

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 2.1. <i>The Apparent Duration of a Residual C-Series</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | page 559-567 |
| McTaggart's definition of a series being "of finite length" . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 559          |
| Definition of "equality of length" of two stretches of the same <i>C-series</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 559-560      |
| Definition of "adjunction" of stretches of a <i>C-series</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 560-561      |
| Amended definition of "being of finite length". A residual <i>C-series</i> is of finite length in this sense . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                    | 561          |
| Conditions under which a discrete residual series would appear to have finite duration, if (a) it had a finite, or (b) an infinite, number of terms . . . . .                                                                                                                                             | 561-562      |
| If each term of a compact residual series appeared to have finite duration, the series would appear to have finite duration only if the apparent durations of closely adjacent terms overlapped in accordance with a certain law . . . . .                                                                | 562-565      |
| If each term appeared to have temporal position but no duration, a compact residual series would appear to have finite duration only if a certain assumption of McTaggart's be granted . . . . .                                                                                                          | 565          |
| Summary of the situation . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 566          |
| Since we do not in fact think of the time-series as having finite duration, either McTaggart's theory of <i>C-series</i> is wrong or we misprehend such series more than he thinks we do . . . . .                                                                                                        | 567          |
| 3. APPARENT DURATION OF END-TERMS AND STRETCHES WHICH INCLUDE THEM . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 567-575      |
| McTaggart asserts that a maximal end-term would appear <i>sub specie temporis</i> to have an indivisible but unending duration, which must be carefully distinguished from the divisible endless duration which a doubly unbounded <i>C-series</i> (if such were possible) would appear to have . . . . . | 568          |
| Properly speaking, neither of the names "finite" and "infinite" can be applied to the apparent duration of an individual term. We can use the names "wholly enclosed" and "half-enclosed", respectively, to describe the apparent duration of an intermediate and of a maximal term . . . . .             | 569          |
| The conception of an indivisible duration that is wholly enclosed is obscure enough; that of a half-enclosed indivisible duration is even more so . . . . .                                                                                                                                               | 569-570      |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 3.1. <i>Apparent Duration of Stretches which include Maximal End-terms</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                   | page 570-572 |
| McTaggart asserts that such stretches would appear to have infinite duration because their maximal end-terms would appear to have endless indivisible duration . . . . .                                               | 570          |
| The argument rests on false analogies and verbal ambiguities. We cannot conjecture how such a stretch would appear <i>sub specie temporis</i> . . .                                                                    | 571-572      |
| 3.2. <i>Apparent Duration of Stretches which include Lower Bounds</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                        | 572-575      |
| McTaggart asserts that such stretches would appear to have finite duration provided that they do not include maximal end-terms . . . . .                                                                               | 572-573      |
| Differences between minimal and maximal end-terms                                                                                                                                                                      | 573-574      |
| A minimal end-term would appear as having no <i>actual</i> predecessors but as having <i>possible</i> predecessors, and so as having come into existence at a finite period after the beginning of possible time . . . | 574          |
| Case in which the lower bound is a limit and not an end-term . . . . .                                                                                                                                                 | 575          |

## BOOK IX

### IMMORTALITY AND GOD

|                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Argument of Book IX . . . . . | 577 |
|-------------------------------|-----|

## CHAPTER LIII

### OSTENSIBLE IMMORTALITY

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Immortality is sempiternity as applied to selves. Sempiternity may be only retrospective or only prospective or absolute . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 579     |
| A particular would be prospectively everlasting if it were prospectively sempiternal and there were no later bound to Time. Similar definitions, <i>mutatis mutandis</i> , can be given for the terms "retrospectively" and "absolutely everlasting" . . . | 580     |
| A self would be immortal if it were prospectively sempiternal. It would be mortal if it were prospectively truncated . . . . .                                                                                                                             | 580-581 |

# CONTENTS

xlix

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| If Time be unreal, it is literally false to call a self "mortal" and to call it "immortal" . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | page 581 |
| Amended definitions of "being sempiternal" and "being truncated" which do not assume the reality of Time . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 581-582  |
| Every self appears <i>sub specie temporis</i> to be absolutely sempiternal and therefore to be immortal . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 582      |
| McTaggart asserts that every self must appear <i>sub specie temporis</i> to be prospectively everlasting. The correct conclusion is that it would appear to have a history which occupies the whole <i>finite</i> duration of future time and ends with a phase which appears to have half-enclosed indivisible duration . . . . | 582-583  |
| If primary <i>C</i> -series have no minimal end-terms, every self must appear <i>sub specie temporis</i> to have developed from a limiting state of complete nullity at the earlier limit of possible time . . . . .                                                                                                             | 583      |
| If primary <i>C</i> -series have minimal end-terms, all selves would appear to have sprung into existence together at the beginning of actual time but at a finite interval after the earlier limit of possible time . . . . .                                                                                                   | 583-584  |
| This interval will be the same for all selves only if a certain postulate be granted. McTaggart tacitly assumes this postulate; and the results of denying it would be highly paradoxical . . . . .                                                                                                                              | 584-585  |
| On either alternative every self would appear to have finite retrospective sempiternity, and to have finite prospective sempiternity ending in a state of half-enclosed indivisible duration . . . . .                                                                                                                           | 585      |
| Similar remarks apply, <i>mutatis mutandis</i> , to $\omega$ -prehensions, and to groups whose members are selves or $\omega$ -prehensions or both . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                     | 586      |
| This conclusion about groups seems at first sight contrary to fact. The example of a "bridge-four" discussed . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 586-587  |
| The solution consists in recognising that <i>sub specie temporis</i> the members of a given group may be sometimes more and sometimes less intimately interconnected . . . . .                                                                                                                                                   | 587-588  |
| Does the theory entail that we must have here and now certain ostensible beliefs which we do not in fact have? . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 588-589  |



## CHAPTER LIV

## OSTENSIBLE PRE-EXISTENCE AND POST-EXISTENCE

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Definitions of "a particular life of a self" and of "pre-existing" and "post-existing" a particular life . . . . .                                                                                                                        | page 590 |
| 1. EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 591-615  |
| 1.1. <i>Apparent Dependence of a Self on its Organism</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                       | 591-592  |
| The empirical facts have led many people to accept one or other of two theories . . . . .                                                                                                                                                 | 591-592  |
| 1.11. <i>Materialism</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 592-598  |
| This covers two theories, viz., Behaviourism and Epiphenomenalism . . . . .                                                                                                                                                               | 592      |
| Any reason for doubting the reality of matter would be <i>pro tanto</i> a reason for doubting the <i>literal</i> truth of both these theories . . . . .                                                                                   | 592-593  |
| But Behaviourism could be restated in terms of the Phenomenalist theory of ostensible material things . . . . .                                                                                                                           | 593-594  |
| And so could Epiphenomenalism . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 594      |
| The Agnostic Form of Causal Theory about ostensibly material things would necessitate a restatement of Materialism but would not refute the view that a man's self is an activity or an effect of his organism . . . . .                  | 594-595  |
| McTaggart alleges that certain psychological causes, which tend to make a person who accepts the commonsense view of matter favourable to Materialism, would not affect a person who accepts the Agnostic Form of Causal Theory . . . . . | 595-596  |
| Still, acceptance of the latter theory does very little to weaken the <i>logical</i> force of the facts which suggest that a man's mind is an activity or an effect of his organism . . . . .                                             | 596-597  |
| Even if human organisms be not really material, it is reasonable to believe that the event which appears as the death of a human body really is a destructive change in a human organism . . . . .                                        | 597-598  |
| 1.12. <i>Other Theories</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 598-602  |
| Two facts which suggest that, even if Materialism be false, the mind which now animates a certain human organism could not exist except in close association with <i>that particular</i> organism . . . . .                               | 598      |



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| McTaggart holds that super-normal psychic phenomena, even if genuine, would not seriously diminish the force of these facts . . . . .                                                                                                                                        | page 598-599 |
| But the utmost that the facts would prove is that a mind cannot <i>function</i> except when intimately associated with <i>some</i> organism or other. This is the "Instrumental Theory" . . . . .                                                                            | 599          |
| The facts are consistent with another theory, which would make a mind even less dependent on any particular organism. This may be called the "Inhibitory Theory" . . . . .                                                                                                   | 599-600      |
| The important question is not whether it is <i>logically possible</i> to hold these theories, but whether either of them is <i>reasonably probable</i> in view of all the known relevant facts . . . . .                                                                     | 600          |
| McTaggart does not seriously discuss this question . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 600-601      |
| And his treatment of the alleged super-normal psychic phenomena is so superficial as to be worthless . . . . .                                                                                                                                                               | 601-602      |
| 1.13. <i>Analogical Argument against the Sempiternity of Selves</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                | 602-603      |
| Since a self cannot be generated or destroyed in the way in which a material thing can be, the transitoriness of material things casts no doubt on the sempiternity of selves . . . . .                                                                                      | 602          |
| But might not selves be analogous, not to material things, but to physical quasi-continuants, like vortices, which can be generated and destroyed? . . . . .                                                                                                                 | 603          |
| 1.14. <i>Summary</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 603-608      |
| If we raise no philosophical difficulties and take no account of super-normal psychic phenomena, the epiphenomenalist form of Materialism is the most plausible theory . . . . .                                                                                             | 603-604      |
| Of the well-established super-normal psychic phenomena <i>many</i> are consistent with Epiphenomenalism, <i>some</i> seem to require at most the theory of a Psychogenic Factor, whilst a <i>very few</i> seem to favour the Instrumental or the Inhibitory theory . . . . . | 604-605      |
| If we raise philosophical questions about causation, we may doubt whether Epiphenomenalism, with its talk of events in the brain "producing" mental events, is an intelligible theory . . . . .                                                                              | 606-607      |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| The Agnostic Form of the Causal Theory about<br>ostensibly material objects is powerless against<br>Materialism, but a definitely Mentalistic theory of<br>such objects would be fatal to Materialism . . .                                         | page 607-608 |
| 1.2. <i>The Organism in McTaggart's System</i> . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                | 608-610      |
| McTaggart gives no detailed mentalistic account of<br>the spiritual realities which we misperceive as<br>living organisms, and no account of the relation of<br>animation . . . . .                                                                 | 608-609      |
| Contrast with Leibniz in this respect . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 609-610      |
| 1.3. <i>Empirical Facts bearing on Pre-existence</i> . . .                                                                                                                                                                                          | 610-615      |
| Love at first sight in this life might be explained by<br>love due to long intimacy in previous lives . . .                                                                                                                                         | 610          |
| Criticism of this suggestion . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 610-611      |
| An innate tendency to acquire very quickly and to a<br>marked degree some specialised skill might be ex-<br>plained by prolonged practice in a previous life.<br>Similar remarks apply, <i>mutatis mutandis</i> , to innate<br>weaknesses . . . . . | 611          |
| In many such cases the facts could be explained by<br>heredity, provided that inheritance of acquired<br>characteristics is admitted and that we know that<br>there was an ancestor with the required qualities .                                   | 611-612      |
| 1.31. <i>Heredity and Pre-existence</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 612-615      |
| A man's present characteristics are determined jointly<br>by those which his self had when it became dis-<br>sociated from his last organism and by the heredi-<br>tary biological influences which moulded his present<br>organism . . . . .       | 612-613      |
| When a zygote is formed it attracts only such of the<br>selves which are then available as are specially<br>adapted to the kind of organism into which it will<br>develope . . . . .                                                                | 613          |
| Comments on this doctrine of selective affinity between<br>selves and zygotes . . . . .                                                                                                                                                             | 613-614      |
| The theory would account for likenesses in mental<br>characteristics between a child and his parents .                                                                                                                                              | 614          |
| Summary of McTaggart's theory of the ostensible in-<br>heritance of mental characteristics. Advantages of<br>the theory of Pre-existence in this connexion .                                                                                        | 614-615      |

# CONTENTS

liii

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 2. PROBABLE DURATION OF PRE-EXISTENCE AND POST-EXISTENCE . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                    | page 615-623 |
| 2.1. <i>Duration of Post-existence</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                      | 616-617      |
| The unlikeness between any self in this life and any self at the $\omega$ -stage is so great as to make it likely that a very long stretch of <i>C</i> -series intervenes between the latter and what appears as the former . . . . . | 616-617      |
| But it is possible, though unlikely, that progress after the end of this life is continuous and constantly accelerated . . . . .                                                                                                      | 617          |
| 2.2. <i>Duration of Pre-existence</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                       | 617-623      |
| All selves are co-aeval with the universe <i>sub specie temporis</i> , yet some seem to be enormously more developed than others . . . . .                                                                                            | 617-618      |
| This may be due to their development being oscillatory and the oscillations being out of phase with each other, or to some selves developing quickly whilst others are stagnating . . . . .                                           | 618          |
| If all selves started with zero content, the difference between the lowest and the highest contemporary selves gives a measure of the development which the latter have undergone since the beginning of Time . . . . .               | 619          |
| Reasons for and against concluding that this amount of development must have taken a very long time . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 619-620      |
| If primary <i>C</i> -series have minimal end-terms, this argument is still further weakened . . . . .                                                                                                                                 | 620          |
| Discussion of this case with diagrams . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                       | 620-621      |
| Might not apparent differences of kind between minds be connected with sufficiently great differences in content of the maximal end-terms of the corresponding primary <i>C</i> -series? . . . . .                                    | 621-622      |
| Application to the duration of pre-existence. No conclusive argument can be based on these considerations . . . . .                                                                                                                   | 622-623      |
| <i>Sub specie temporis</i> every self must have pre-existed as long as the ostensibly material world has done so . . . . .                                                                                                            | 623          |
| 3. PLURALITY OF LIVES . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 623-628      |
| Two arguments which, McTaggart thinks, suggest that, even if we did not pre-exist, our post-existence will probably be broken up into many successive lives . . . . .                                                                 | 623-624      |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Criticism of these arguments . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | page 624-625 |
| A third argument to the same effect . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 625-626      |
| Criticism of this argument . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 626          |
| Restatement of the argument . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 626-627      |
| McTaggart argues that the likelihood of a plurality of<br>lives is increased if human selves are retrospectively,<br>as well as prospectively, sempiternal . . . . .                                                                                                                 | 627          |
| Criticism of this argument . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 627-628      |
| 4. LOSS OF MEMORY AT DEATH . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 628-639      |
| 4.1. <i>Effects of an irrevocable Loss of Memory</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 629-635      |
| Even if memory of each life were lost irrevocably at<br>each death, all the lives of a given self would be<br>appearances of various stretches of a single primary<br><i>C</i> -series, and would thus be intimately and uniquely<br>inter-related . . . . .                         | 629-630      |
| Each life in such a series would have its own positive<br>value . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 630          |
| It would still be reasonable to feel a <i>special</i> interest in<br>suppositions about the character of <i>one's own</i> past<br>and future lives . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 630-631      |
| Each life would probably start at a higher or a lower<br>level because of traces left by one's actions in one's<br>forgotten past lives . . . . .                                                                                                                                    | 632-633      |
| If <i>A</i> has loved <i>B</i> in a past life which he has forgotten,<br>this may intensify his love for <i>B</i> if they meet in a<br>later life . . . . .                                                                                                                          | 633-634      |
| If McTaggart's general theory be correct, it is highly<br>likely that lovers will meet in many of their lives,<br>since each must be a member of the other's differen-<br>tiating group . . . . .                                                                                    | 634-635      |
| But there is no great likelihood that a person will ever<br>again be a member of any of the groups to which he<br>now feels loyalty . . . . .                                                                                                                                        | 635          |
| 4.2. <i>Recovery of Memory at the End of Time</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 635-639      |
| Independent statement of McTaggart's argument . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 636-637      |
| The conclusion, stated in temporal terms, is that at<br>the end of Time every self will correctlyprehend,<br>as a timeless inclusion-series, that primary <i>C</i> -series<br>which he misprehended at every earlier moment as<br>his history throughout the whole of time . . . . . | 637          |
| Two criticisms on the argument . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 637-639      |

## CONTENTS

lv

|                                                                                                                  |              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 5. CONCLUDING REMARKS . . . . .                                                                                  | page 639-640 |
| The theory of a plurality of lives is of considerable<br>theoretical interest and practical importance . . . . . | 639          |
| Restatement of the doctrine in terms of the theory of<br>persistent Psycho-genic Factors . . . . .               | 639-640      |

## CHAPTER LV

### GOD

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| McTaggart's combination of views about Immortality<br>and God was a very unusual one in contemporary<br>European thought . . . . .                                                                                                                              | 641-642 |
| McTaggart's definition of "deity" . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 642-643 |
| The Christian Trinity would not be a god on this<br>definition. An amended definition proposed to meet<br>this inconvenience . . . . .                                                                                                                          | 643     |
| McTaggart condemns the extended use which Spinoza<br>and Hegel make of the word "God". The phrase<br>"the Absolute" should be used to express what they<br>had in mind . . . . .                                                                                | 643-644 |
| If God existed, he would either be identical with the<br>universe, or be the creator of the rest of the uni-<br>verse, or would control the rest of the universe<br>without having created it . . . . .                                                         | 644     |
| McTaggart asserts that the universe could not be a<br>god, since this would entail that one self had other<br>selves as parts. Criticisms on this argument . . . . .                                                                                            | 644-645 |
| He asserts that no self could have created the rest of<br>the universe, because (a) all selves (as primary<br>parts) are equally fundamental, and (b) creation<br>would involve temporal relations in two ways . . . . .                                        | 645-646 |
| He rejects the Cosmological Argument . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 646     |
| But creation is certainly not a form of causation, as<br>defined by McTaggart, nor does the Cosmological<br>Argument use causation in this sense. So his<br>arguments, which rest on his own special theories<br>about causation, are irrelevant here . . . . . | 646-647 |
| McTaggart denies that any self could stand to the<br>rest of the universe in any relation at all closely<br>analogous to the creative relation, because all selves<br>are on a level as primary parts . . . . .                                                 | 647     |



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| And he denies that any self could stand to the rest of the universe in any relation which would appear <i>sub specie temporis</i> as the creative relation, on the ground that all selves are <i>sub specie temporis</i> co-aeval . . . . .           | page 647-648 |
| Criticism of this argument . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 648-649      |
| In spite of the criticism it must be granted that, on McTaggart's theory, no self could appear to be much like a creative god . . . . .                                                                                                               | 649          |
| On the grounds of his theory of causation McTaggart denies that any self could stand to the rest of the universe either in the relation of governance or in any closely analogous relation . . . . .                                                  | 649-650      |
| Here "causation" is being used in a sense in which McTaggart's theory of it is relevant; but it is doubtful whether his argument is valid . . . .                                                                                                     | 650          |
| According to McTaggart it is not impossible that a self should stand to the rest of the universe in a relation which would appear <i>sub specie temporis</i> as governance . . . . .                                                                  | 650-651      |
| McTaggart's account and criticisms of the Argument from Design . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                              | 651-652      |
| He assumes that the argument postulates God in order to account for the mere existence of general laws; but really it does so only in order to account for special collocations of particulars and the special form of certain general laws . . . . . | 652          |
| Summary . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 652-653      |

## BOOK X

## VALUE IN THE UNIVERSE

|                              |         |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Argument of Book X . . . . . | 655-656 |
|------------------------------|---------|

## CHAPTER LVI

## GENERAL THEORY OF VALUE

|                                                                                                                          |         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. NATURE OF VALUE-PREDICATES . . . . .                                                                                  | 657-663 |
| A thing has value if it can significantly be said to be as good as or better than or worse than something else . . . . . | 657     |
| Zero homogeneous value and zero nett value distinguished . . . . .                                                       | 657-658 |



# CONTENTS

lvii

|                                                                                                                                                                                                           |              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1.1. <i>The Predicates "Good" and "Evil"</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                    | page 658-663 |
| Intrinsic goodness and badness distinguished from utility and disutility respectively . . . . .                                                                                                           | 658          |
| 1.11. <i>Indefinability of "Good" and "Evil"</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                | 658-663      |
| McTaggart asserts that "good" and "evil" cannot be defined in non-ethical terms . . . . .                                                                                                                 | 658-659      |
| He does not consider whether they could be defined in terms of other ethical notions . . . . .                                                                                                            | 659          |
| Could "good" and "evil" be terms like "great" and "small", and not polar opposites like "black" and "white"? . . . . .                                                                                    | 659-660      |
| If so, it would never be reasonable (as in fact it often is) to say of any person, however bad he or his states might be, that it would have been better if he had not existed . . . . .                  | 660-662      |
| McTaggart concludes that "good" and "evil" are polar opposites, and that neither can be defined in terms of the other . . . . .                                                                           | 662          |
| 1.2. <i>Value pertaining to Wholes</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                          | 662-663      |
| "X contains value" means "X has at least one part which has value". "Value pertains to X" means "Either X has value or it contains value" . . . . .                                                       | 663          |
| 2. VALIFYING CHARACTERISTICS . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                    | 663-668      |
| Good-making and bad-making characteristics distinguished from goodness and badness respectively . . . . .                                                                                                 | 663-664      |
| 2.1. <i>Enumeration of Valifying Characteristics</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                            | 664-665      |
| A list of six characteristics which, McTaggart thinks, includes all those which have ever been held to be valifying . . . . .                                                                             | 664-665      |
| 2.2. <i>Existence is not a Valifying Characteristic</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                         | 665-668      |
| Preliminary elucidation of the subject. A mere set of characteristics could have no value . . . . .                                                                                                       | 665          |
| An instance of a set of characteristics could not have value unless it were existend, i.e., unless it would be a particular . . . . .                                                                     | 665-666      |
| There is no analytic connexion between being existend and being good or between being existend and being bad. But some people have held that any existend would, as such, be more good than bad . . . . . | 666          |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Probably they inferred this from the premise that good is a characteristic with no polar opposite, and that to be bad means to be less good than some standard term . . . . .                                                                      | page 666-667 |
| The premise is almost certainly false, and the conclusion is not a legitimate inference from it . . . .                                                                                                                                            | 667-668      |
| There is no uniform connexion, analytic or synthetic, between being existend and being good or between being existend and being bad . . . . .                                                                                                      | 668          |
| 3. VALUE AS A KIND OF MAGNITUDE . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 668-690      |
| 3.1. <i>Resultant Value and Nett Aggregate Value</i> . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                       | 668-677      |
| A thing which has value, but does not contain value, may have either <i>pure</i> goodness or badness, or a good or bad or neutral <i>shade</i> of <i>blended</i> value . . . .                                                                     | 668-669      |
| A thing which contains value, but does not have value, may contain either an <i>unmixed</i> aggregate of goodness or of badness, or a <i>nett</i> aggregate of goodness or of badness or of neutral value . . . . .                                | 669          |
| 3.11. <i>McTaggart's Doctrine of Nett Aggregate Value</i> . .                                                                                                                                                                                      | 670-677      |
| McTaggart asserts that, associated with <i>any</i> whole which contains value, there is always a quantum which may be called its "aggregate nett value" . . . .                                                                                    | 670          |
| The only reason that he gives is an analogy to the "total" or the "average" drunkenness of a town. There are difficulties even in this notion, and there are much greater difficulties in that of nett aggregate value . . . . .                   | 670-671      |
| "Intrinsic" and "constructed" magnitudes distinguished . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                   | 671          |
| The volume of a bit of matter is an intrinsic magnitude; the average drunkenness of a town is a constructed magnitude; it is doubtful whether any magnitude can be constructed which could be called "the nett aggregate value in a whole" . . . . | 671-672      |
| The objection that McTaggart's doctrine of Value is "too quantitative". The doctrine presupposes three propositions . . . . .                                                                                                                      | 672          |
| Critical discussion of the first of these . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                | 673          |
| The second itself presupposes four propositions, of which McTaggart mentions and defends only two . . . . .                                                                                                                                        | 673-674      |

# CONTENTS

lix

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| He defends the assumption that intensive magnitudes can be measured by appealing to his doctrine that intensive quanta of the same kind have "differences" which are extensive quanta . . . . .                                                   | page 674 |
| The doctrine is nonsensical and the defence invalid. But a defence on different lines is possible . . . .                                                                                                                                         | 674-675  |
| The assumption that quanta which can be measured can be summed. This gives rise to three questions . . . . .                                                                                                                                      | 675-676  |
| The real objection to McTaggart's theory of nett aggregate value is not that it is "too quantitative" but that it is too simple-minded . . . . .                                                                                                  | 676-677  |
| We ought not to speak without qualification of <i>the</i> nett aggregate value in a whole; we ought to speak only of the nett aggregate value contained in a whole <i>in respect of</i> a certain set of parts . . . .                            | 677      |
| 3.2. <i>Value as a dependent Variable</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                               | 678-690  |
| The value at any moment of anything that is ostensibly temporal depends jointly on the magnitudes at various moments of its various valifying characteristics and on the ostensible duration for which it has had these characteristics . . . . . | 678      |
| 3.21. <i>Dependence on Valifying Characteristics</i> . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                      | 678-683  |
| Five of the six valifying characteristics enumerated above have no <i>intrinsic</i> upper bound. The case of virtue deferred . . . . .                                                                                                            | 678-679  |
| Every increase in the degree of any valifying characteristic involves <i>caeteris paribus</i> some increase in the value of anything which it characterises . . . .                                                                               | 679      |
| Love is "supremely and uniquely good" in the sense that there is no limit to the amount of goodness which a person might derive in a given period from a sufficiently high degree of erotic emotion . . . .                                       | 679-680  |
| The amount of goodness which could be derived in a finite time from any other good-making characteristic has an upper limit which cannot be surpassed however much the intensity of the characteristic may be increased . . . . .                 | 680      |
| Pain (and not hatred) is supremely and uniquely evil in the sense in which love is supremely and uniquely good . . . . .                                                                                                                          | 680-681  |
| 3.211. <i>The Special Case of Virtue</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                | 681-683  |
| Two possible definitions of "being a virtuous person" . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                   | 681      |
| On either of them this property <i>would</i> have an intrinsic maximum or upper limit . . . . .                                                                                                                                                   | 681-682  |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| But they are both inadequate, because they take no account of what a person <i>would</i> have done <i>if</i> he had been exposed to greater temptations. With the amended definitions "being virtuous" is the name of a property which has no intrinsic upper bound | page 682-683 |
| 3.22. <i>Dependence on Ostensible Duration</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 683-688      |
| Two principles used by McTaggart in his argument                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 683          |
| He regards them as consequences of a certain more fundamental principle. Attempt to state this clearly                                                                                                                                                              | 684          |
| He concludes that any value due to the manifestation of any valifying characteristic with finite intensity for a finite time may be surpassed by the value due to the manifestation of this characteristic with less intensity for a longer time                    | 685          |
| This does not follow, but it may be true. Attempt to state it more carefully                                                                                                                                                                                        | 685-686      |
| In a restricted form it has some claims to be self-evident. In a generalised form it is of doubtful validity                                                                                                                                                        | 686-687      |
| Comparison of "a million years of brilliant life followed by annihilation" with "any length of an oyster-like life which had a slight excess of good"                                                                                                               | 687          |
| McTaggart holds that it would be reasonable to prefer the latter if only it were long enough. Reasons for doubting this                                                                                                                                             | 687-688      |
| 3.23. <i>Concluding Remarks on Value as a Dependent Variable</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 688-690      |
| McTaggart and many others assume a view of Value which is analogous to the "two-fluid theory" of electricity                                                                                                                                                        | 688-689      |
| Formal statement of this assumption                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 689          |
| It is far from self-evident when made explicit                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 689-690      |
| A further assumption, which is often made, would conflict with Moore's Principle of Organic Unities                                                                                                                                                                 | 690          |

CHAPTER LVII

THE BEARERS OF VALUE

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Value cannot be significantly ascribed to anything that is not spiritual in McTaggart's sense of the word .                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | page 691 |
| Can it be significantly ascribed to spiritual particulars of every kind? . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 691-692  |
| 1. HAVE GROUPS OF SELVES ANY VALUE? . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 692-694  |
| McTaggart denies that any group of selves can have value . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 692      |
| This is <i>prima facie</i> contrary to common opinion, and it is by no means self-evident on reflexion . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 692-693  |
| It would not conflict with the fact that the value pertaining to any self is largely determined by its relations to other selves . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                  | 693      |
| 1.1. <i>Can Value be significantly predicated of the Universe?</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 693-694  |
| McTaggart denies this, on the ground that the universe is a group of selves . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 693-694  |
| But, on his view, the universe is <i>also</i> a group of <i>ω</i> -prehensions. Might it not have value in respect of being such a group? . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                         | 694      |
| 2. HAVE BOTH SELVES AND EXPERIENCES VALUE? . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 694-714  |
| It is possible that "good" and "bad" are applied in the same indefinable sense to selves and to experiences . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 694-695  |
| Or that they are applied in the indefinable sense to experiences and in a derivative sense to selves; or that the precise opposite is the case . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                    | 695      |
| McTaggart's theory of Time and <i>C</i> -series greatly complicates the discussion of these alternative possibilities . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                             | 695-696  |
| <i>Sub specie temporis</i> a self is a persistent continuant, with dispositional properties; and its experiences are parts of its <i>history</i> but not of <i>it</i> . Really a self is a timeless two-dimensional whole, with no dispositional properties; and its experiences are certain timeless parts of it . . . . . | 696      |
| <i>Sub specie temporis</i> we distinguish between being a good or bad self and being a self whose history contains a balance of good or of bad experiences or actions . . . . .                                                                                                                                             | 696-697  |



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| McTaggart often talks as if <i>sub specie temporis</i> a self could be identified with its own history, and as if the phases in the latter were <i>sub specie temporis</i> parts of the former . . . . .                      | page 697 |
| Systematic enumeration of the eight kinds of timeless entity associated, on McTaggart's theory of Time and <i>C</i> -series, with any particular which appears <i>sub specie temporis</i> as a person . . . . .               | 698-699  |
| This leads to 255 possible theories about the bearers of the value pertaining to a self. These can be classified into eight groups . . . . .                                                                                  | 699      |
| McTaggart confines his attention to the eighth group, and does not clearly distinguish the eight possibilities which fall into it . . . . .                                                                                   | 699-700  |
| These eight theories may be called "monistic". Restatement and classification of them . . . .                                                                                                                                 | 700-701  |
| Some of them are more "atomistic" and others more "organic" . . . . .                                                                                                                                                         | 701      |
| 2.1. <i>McTaggart's Arguments</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                   | 701-713  |
| From the fact that selves are the primary parts of the universe we cannot safely infer that selves or primary <i>C</i> -series are the only bearers of value . . . .                                                          | 702      |
| Does any good or evil pertain to the pre-maximal stages of any <i>C</i> -series? . . . . .                                                                                                                                    | 702-703  |
| The existence of error and of at least ostensibly unpleasant feeling, jealous emotion, and contra-conscientious volition in these stages suffices to show that there really is <i>evil</i> pertaining to them . .             | 703-704  |
| If to have or to be a veridical cognition or an ostensibly pleasant feeling are good-making characteristics, there really is <i>good</i> pertaining to the pre-maximal stages . . . . .                                       | 705      |
| It is doubtful whether having or being a <i>false</i> belief that one is having a good emotion or a right volition is a good-making characteristic . . . . .                                                                  | 705-706  |
| Therefore, if the only good-making characteristic were having or being an emotion or a volition of certain kinds, it would be abstractly possible that there is no <i>good</i> pertaining to the pre-maximal stages . . . . . | 706-707  |
| McTaggart's argument against the theory that only selves have value. It must be considered both in reference to primary <i>C</i> -series and to the primary parts which are their maximal end-terms . . . .                   | 707      |



# CONTENTS

lxiii

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| The facts adduced by McTaggart make it very difficult to accept the theory that only primary <i>C</i> -series, taken as wholes, have value . . . . .                                                                                                                                  | page 707-709 |
| They also make it difficult to accept the theory that only the maximal end-terms of primary <i>C</i> -series have value . . . . .                                                                                                                                                     | 709          |
| McTaggart's argument against the theory that only experiences have value, and in favour of the theory that only selves have value . . . . .                                                                                                                                           | 710-711      |
| Three criticisms on this argument . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 711-712      |
| A fourth objection. The argument assumes that, unless selves have value, the only sense in which a self can be called "good" or "bad" is that its total history contains a balance of good or of bad experiences respectively . . . . .                                               | 712          |
| This assumption conflicts with the fact that selves are called "good" or "bad" only in respect of their <i>dispositions</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                 | 712-713      |
| 2.2. <i>Summary</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 713-714      |
| Enumeration of five interconnected sources of difficulty and confusion in this part of McTaggart's doctrine . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                 | 713-714      |
| 3. UNCONSCIOUS MENTAL STATES AND VALUE . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 715-718      |
| 3.1. <i>In what Sense are there Unconscious Mental States?</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 715-716      |
| In order to square McTaggart's general theory of <i>C</i> -series with the appearances it is necessary to assume that many experiences of any human self are "unconscious", in the sense that their owner prehends them only as undiscriminated items in a vague background . . . . . | 715-716      |
| 3.2 <i>Undiscriminated States and Value</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 716-718      |
| <i>Sub specie temporis</i> any state of himself which a person fails to discriminate at a given moment is likely either to be of very low intensity or to be in the very remote past or future . . . . .                                                                              | 716-717      |
| In the first case an estimate of the value pertaining to the owner of such a state will not be much vitiated by omitting to take account of it . . . . .                                                                                                                              | 717          |
| On the second alternative such estimates are subject only to the general uncertainty which admittedly arises from our ignorance about the remote past and future . . . . .                                                                                                            | 717-718      |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Even if each very faint experience, taken separately,<br>contributes little to the value pertaining to a self,<br>it is rash to conclude that the co-existence of a mass<br>of such states contributes little . . . . . | page 718 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|

CHAPTER LVIII

THE VALUE ASSOCIATED WITH THE MAXIMAL  
END-TERM OF A PRIMARY *C*-SERIES

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. THE GENERAL NOTION OF VALUE ASSOCIATED WITH<br>A TERM OF A PRIMARY <i>C</i> -SERIES . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                       | 719-726 |
| Since all the other terms of a <i>C</i> -series are contained in<br>its maximal end-term, will not any evil associated<br>with any of the former be <i>ipso facto</i> associated with<br>the latter? . . . . .                                                                         | 719-720 |
| McTaggart's financial analogy to show that this need<br>not be so. It is unintelligible to the financial ex-<br>perts consulted by the present writer . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 720-721 |
| It is quite certain that any value which <i>pertains to</i><br>any pre-maximal term of a <i>C</i> -series must <i>ipso facto</i><br>pertain to its maximal end-term . . . . .                                                                                                          | 721     |
| But there may be value pertaining to the latter which<br>does not pertain to any of the former . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                               | 721-722 |
| McTaggart asserts that each stage of a <i>C</i> -series "has<br>its separate value, which is not part of the value of<br>the final stage". Yet he asserts elsewhere that it is<br>quite uncertain whether individual terms of <i>C</i> -<br>series <i>have</i> value at all . . . . .  | 722-723 |
| There is no doubt that McTaggart's statements are<br>verbally inconsistent in at least two respects. What<br>did he really mean? . . . . .                                                                                                                                             | 723     |
| A term of a primary <i>C</i> -series, which neither <i>had</i> nor<br><i>contained</i> value, might yet <i>contribute</i> value to the<br>corresponding self, in so far as the property of con-<br>taining such a term might be a valifying charac-<br>teristic of that self . . . . . | 724     |
| If the terms of a primary <i>C</i> -series <i>have</i> or <i>contribute</i><br>value, it will be true to say that each of them has<br>or contributes "its separate value" . . . . .                                                                                                    | 724     |
| But there is a difficulty in interpreting McTaggart's<br>assertion if such terms only <i>contain</i> value . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                   | 724-725 |
| This can be avoided if we suppose that McTaggart is<br>confining his attention to those parts of any term<br>in a primary <i>C</i> -series which occupy corresponding<br>positions to it in their own secondary <i>C</i> -series . . . . .                                             | 725     |

This restriction is seen to be reasonable if we consider what it would mean *sub specie temporis* . . . . . page 725-726

We may define "the value associated with a term  $P_A^r$ " as consisting of the value (if any) which  $P_A^r$  has, the value (if any) which the self  $A$  derives from possessing such a part as  $P_A^r$ , and the value (if any) which  $P_A^r$  contains in respect of those valuable parts of it which correspond in their  $C$ -position to it. This can be extended, with a slight modification, to  $P_A^\omega$  726

2. VALUE ASSOCIATED WITH THE MAXIMAL TERM OF A PRIMARY  $C$ -SERIES . . . . . 727

2.1. *The valifying Characteristics* . . . . . 727-746

2.11. *Cognition* . . . . . 727-728

Cognition at the  $\omega$ -stage is wholly veridical and thoroughly clear and distinct; and, though it is limited in range, this cannot give rise to a frustrated desire for more complete knowledge . . . . . 727-728

2.12. *Emotion* . . . . . 728-732

All the emotions which *must* exist at the  $\omega$ -stage are either intrinsically or contributively good; and none which are intrinsically or contributively evil *can* exist at that stage . . . . . 728

It is true that there can be  $\omega$ -love which is not returned . . . . . 729

But the lover at the  $\omega$ -stage sees that the only persons who feel neither love nor affection for him at that stage are those who are neither directly nor indirectly aware of him; and he cannot have a frustrated  $\omega$ -wish that this should be otherwise . . . . . 729-730

McTaggart claims to have shown that  $\omega$ -love and the emotions which depend on it must be more intense than the corresponding emotions at the  $r$ -stages . . . . . 730

Reasons for thinking that the range of a person's  $\omega$ -love and  $\omega$ -affection is wider than that of his  $r$ -love and  $r$ -affection . . . . . 730-732

2.13. *Hedonic Tone* . . . . . 732-735

The impossibility of there being frustrated  $\omega$ -desire does not suffice to show that there is no unpleasant  $\omega$ -experience . . . . . 732

Painful sensation (like all sensation) must be absent from the  $\omega$ -stage. So too must frustrated desire and all the more obviously unpleasant emotions . . . . . 732-733

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| The only unpleasant $\omega$ -experience which is possible is unpleasantly toned cognition of particulars which are really evil and are prehended as such . . .                                                                                                            | page 733 |
| Such evils do exist at the $r$ -stages, and they are prehended as such from the $\omega$ -stage . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                  | 733-734  |
| McTaggart's attempt to prove that primary $\omega$ -pleasure must greatly outweigh this sympathetic $\omega$ -displeasure . . . . .                                                                                                                                        | 734      |
| Some of the most intense pleasures that we enjoy are bound up with ostensible sensation and ostensible action, and therefore cannot exist at the $\omega$ -stage .                                                                                                         | 734-735  |
| McTaggart's attempt to deal with this . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 735      |
| 2.14. <i>Extent and Intensity of Consciousness</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 735-736  |
| If this gives value at all, it gives only goodness; and it is likely to be greater at the $\omega$ -stage than at any of the $r$ -stages . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 735-736  |
| 2.15. <i>Harmony and Coherence</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 736      |
| The $\omega$ -stage must be greatly and unmixedly good in these respects . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                         | 736      |
| 2.16. <i>Virtue</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 736-745  |
| Statement of McTaggart's doctrine of Virtue in five propositions . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 736-737  |
| It entails that morally good or bad volitions cannot exist in a self unless it knows or believes that there are non-moral goods and evils . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 737      |
| Since there are non-moral goods and evils at all stages, and they are cognised as such from the $\omega$ -stage, it is possible that there should be virtuous or vicious $\omega$ -volitions . . . . .                                                                     | 737-738  |
| The fact that all $\omega$ -cognition of evils is acquiescent does not prove that there is vicious $\omega$ -volition .                                                                                                                                                    | 738      |
| For the evils which are cognised from the $\omega$ -stage are seen to be necessary conditions of the intrinsically good $\omega$ -emotions of love and complacency; and they are acquiesced in for that reason, and not in respect of the qualities which make them evil . | 738-739  |
| Example to illustrate McTaggart's doctrine . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 739      |
| In the $r$ -stages acquiescence in such evils might be morally bad, because they might be mistakenly thought not to be necessary conditions of greater goods . . . . .                                                                                                     | 739-740  |

# CONTENTS

lxvii

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| The greatness of an evil which is cognised from the $\omega$ -stage may reduce the acquiescence with which it is cognised to zero; but it cannot do more, because there is no polar opposite to acquiescence, according to McTaggart . . . . . | page 740 |
| Summary of McTaggart's doctrine . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 740-741  |
| 2.161. <i>Criticisms of McTaggart's Account of <math>\omega</math>-Virtue</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                        | 741-745  |
| In so far as it depends on his view that acquiescence has no polar opposite, it is highly doubtful . . . . .                                                                                                                                   | 741-742  |
| Could anything be cognised as a necessary condition at a stage at which there can be no ostensible conception of alternative possibilities to the actually existent? . . . . .                                                                 | 742      |
| Is not nearly all serious virtue inseparably bound up with ostensible action against obstacles and endurance of ostensibly painful sensations? . . . . .                                                                                       | 742-743  |
| McTaggart ascribes this objection to three confusions which, he thinks, are liable to make us unfair to the $\omega$ -stage as compared with the $r$ -stages . . . . .                                                                         | 743-744  |
| The first is relevant only to our estimate of hedonically determined value at the $\omega$ -stage . . . . .                                                                                                                                    | 744      |
| It is true that we must not confuse eternity with unchanging persistence; but the real difficulty is that we have no positive notion of timeless existence . . . . .                                                                           | 744-745  |
| There are certain sources of bias in favour of the eternal as against the temporal, which McTaggart does not mention . . . . .                                                                                                                 | 745      |
| 2.17. <i>Summary of McTaggart's Conclusions</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                      | 745-746  |
| 2.2. <i>Influence of Ostensible Duration on Value at the <math>\omega</math>-Stage</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                               | 746-758  |
| Four peculiarities of the maximal end-term of a primary $C$ -series; two of them intrinsic and two extrinsic . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 746-747  |
| Any series which appears to have finite duration contains only finite value; but, if any series could appear to have infinite duration, it would contain infinite value . . . . .                                                              | 747-748  |
| A $C$ -series could not appear as a $B$ -series of infinite duration unless it were ( <i>per impossibile</i> ) unbounded in both directions . . . . .                                                                                          | 748-749  |



|                                                                                                                                                                                                       |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Any such series would contain an infinite number of terms; but the infinity of the value contained in it would depend on its being unbounded, and not on its having an infinite number of terms . . . | page 749 |
| A maximal end-term is unbounded on one side; so McTaggart concludes that it must derive infinite value from this, as an unbounded <i>C</i> -series would do from <i>its</i> boundlessness . . . . .   | 749-750  |
| The argument depends on confusing "unbounded", as applied to <i>stretches</i> , with "unbounded", as applied to <i>individual terms</i> . . . . .                                                     | 750-751  |
| Another argument, on which McTaggart lays little stress, for the same conclusion . . . . .                                                                                                            | 751-752  |
| An <i>argumentum ad absurdum</i> to show that the value associated with an individual term is finite or infinite according to whether the term is or is not bounded on both sides . . . . .           | 752-753  |
| This depends on confusing "occupying a certain proportion of a series", as applied to <i>stretches</i> , with the same expression, as applied to <i>individual terms</i> . . .                        | 753-754  |
| A meaning can be attached to the statement that a certain term occupies a certain proportion of a series, if and only if the series be finite and discrete . . . . .                                  | 754      |
| Even then there is no sense in comparing the proportion of a series occupied by a stretch with the proportion occupied by a single term . . . . .                                                     | 755-756  |
| McTaggart's <i>argumentum ad absurdum</i> rejected. An amended argument proposed which might establish the eighth step in McTaggart's argument . . .                                                  | 756-757  |
| The two remaining steps are still left doubtful . . . . .                                                                                                                                             | 757      |
| In estimating value our only empirical data are stretches, and we have no means of estimating the value associated with any individual term, whether maximal or pre-maximal . . . . .                 | 757-758  |
| 3. CERTAIN PECULIARITIES IN $\omega$ -VALUE . . . . .                                                                                                                                                 | 758-764  |
| The value associated with an $\omega$ -term must be a purely intensive quantum . . . . .                                                                                                              | 758-759  |
| Since the value pertaining to a stretch must be an extensive quantum, is it legitimate to compare the two? McTaggart's attempt to show that it is . . .                                               | 759      |
| Restatement of the question. The present writer does not know the answer to it . . . . .                                                                                                              | 759-760  |



# CONTENTS

lxix

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| The only terms which have infinite value associated with them are those which appear as eternal when viewed from the corresponding stage in another <i>C</i> -series . . . . .                                                                                             | page 760 |
| It is of special practical interest to us that the infinitely valuable terms appear <i>sub specie temporis</i> to come at the end, and not at the beginning, of time . . . . .                                                                                             | 760-761  |
| The infinity of the value associated with an $\omega$ -term is not due to the valifying characteristics being infinitely intense at the $\omega$ -stage. They may be little more intense than they are at adjacent <i>r</i> -stages of the same <i>C</i> -series . . . . . | 761      |
| If the value associated with an $\omega$ -term were the aggregate of the values pertaining to the <i>r</i> -terms which it contains, it would be finite instead of infinite . . . . .                                                                                      | 761-762  |
| There might be "angelic selves", in which there is no series of <i>r</i> -states of prehension but only an $\omega$ -stage undifferentiated in the <i>C</i> -dimension . . . . .                                                                                           | 762      |
| McTaggart argues that the value associated with such a self must be either infinitesimal or infinite; and he thinks that the first alternative may be rejected as absurd . . . . .                                                                                         | 762-763  |
| Three criticisms on his argument . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 763      |
| Independent discussion. Reasons, both <i>a priori</i> and empirical, for thinking that the value associated with an angelic self would be less, <i>caeteris paribus</i> , than that associated with the $\omega$ -term of a primary <i>C</i> -series . . . . .             | 763-764  |
| A special reason is needed, according to McTaggart, to explain why the value associated with a particular should be <i>finite</i> . If there is no reason for its being finite, it will be infinite . . . . .                                                              | 764      |
| 4. IS $\omega$ -VALUE PREDOMINANTLY GOOD OR PREDOMINANTLY BAD? . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 764-768  |
| The only question is about hedonically determined $\omega$ -value, since in all other respects $\omega$ -value is infinitely and unmixedly good . . . . .                                                                                                                  | 764-765  |
| There is certainly sympathetic $\omega$ -pain. Is it counterbalanced by original and sympathetic $\omega$ -pleasure? . . . . .                                                                                                                                             | 765-766  |
| McTaggart's argument, arranged in nine steps, to prove that it is infinitely counterbalanced . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                     | 766-767  |

|                                                                                                                                                             |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Summary. The sympathetic $\omega$ -pain is a singly infinite quantum, whilst the sympathetic $\omega$ -pleasure is a doubly infinite quantum . . . . .      | page 767 |
| A criticism on this argument . . . . .                                                                                                                      | 767-768  |
| A cause which, McTaggart thinks, might possibly diminish the amount of sympathetic $\omega$ -pain as compared with sympathetic $\omega$ -pleasure . . . . . | 768      |

## CHAPTER LIX

## CONCLUDING REMARKS ON VALUE

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| We have much less certain and detailed information about the amount of value pertaining to the pre-maximal stretch of a <i>C</i> -series than about the amount of value associated with its maximal end-term . . . . .                                                                                                                  | 769-770 |
| We have hardly any trustworthy information, empirical or <i>a priori</i> , about the "probationary stages", i.e., the stretch of each primary <i>C</i> -series which appears <i>sub specie temporis</i> as the history of a self from now until the end of time . . . . .                                                               | 770     |
| We have no reason to expect an uninterrupted increase in goodness as compared with badness . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 770-771 |
| A process of deterioration, begun in one life of a self and continued up to the end of it, may be carried further in its next life . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                            | 771     |
| Continuous improvement in a community throughout a period is compatible with steady degeneration on the part of every individual who has ever been a member of it during that period; and conversely . . . . .                                                                                                                          | 771-772 |
| Any hope that we may legitimately entertain for ourselves or our species cannot be justified by any special value or importance attaching to the <i>human</i> individual or the <i>human</i> race. It can be justified only by general metaphysical arguments to show that selves, as such, are the ultimate units of reality . . . . . | 772-773 |
| McTaggart thinks that most idealists have in practice underrated the vastness of the universe and the relative insignificance of man and his history . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                          | 773     |
| McTaggart's theory is optimistic only in a run which is as long as the whole of apparent future time . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 773-774 |
| RETROSPECT . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 777     |
| <i>Index of Proper Names and Titles</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 791     |
| <i>Index of Technical Terms</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 793     |

## PREFACE

In the preface to Vol. I of this work I said that, if I should have life and health and if the capitalist system should continue to stagger on, I hoped to complete the second volume in about two years' time. That was written in October 1932. My own health has been excellent; and the capitalist system, in England at any rate, has recovered to an extent which has deeply distressed those who had appointed themselves its residuary legatees. Nevertheless, I am two years behind time with this volume. The causes of the delay are as follows.

In June 1933 I was appointed Knightbridge Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Cambridge. It therefore became my duty to proceed with the least possible delay to find out the difference between Right and Wrong and to impart the information to undergraduates in a course of three lectures a week during each term of the academic year 1933 to 1934. This took up the whole of my time and energy until June 1934. I was by then so tired of writing that I deemed it wise to stop altogether for a while and to spend the Long Vacation of 1934 in toying with Lewis and Langford's *Symbolic Logic*, which had recently appeared. Then the Society for Psychical Research did me the honour to make me their President. This involved writing a presidential address; and I spent much time and thought in trying to clear my ideas, first about Mr J. W. Dunne's theory of time and his explanation of precognition, and secondly about the ontological and epistemological implications of telepathy and clairvoyance. I embodied the results of the former exercise in an article on "Mr Dunne's Theory of Time" in *Philosophy*, and those of the latter in a paper on "Normal Cognition, Telepathy, and Clairvoyance" in the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R. Beside these labours I tried long and earnestly, but (as I am told on the best authority) without success, to understand Prof. Hallett's *Aeternitas*; and I recorded my failure in two articles in *Mind*.

Finally, I had to write a long and elaborate paper as a participant in the symposium on *Mechanical and Teleological Causation* at the joint session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association in July 1935.

I hope that I have now made it plain that the two extra years, during which readers of Vol. I have, no doubt, been straining at the leash, have not been spent wholly in idleness and dissipation. I began to work again on McTaggart in the Long Vacation of 1935, and I have worked steadily at Vol. II from then until now.

I must apologise to the reader for the great length of the book. In mitigation I would put forward two pleas. In the first place, Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence* is itself a long book; it contains rather more than one and a half times the number of pages contained in Vol. I. Secondly, I am really giving the reader three works bound in one volume. One is a restatement of McTaggart's own doctrines, together with a suitable notation for expressing them. Another is a criticism of those doctrines. And the third is an independent discussion of most of the fundamental problems which McTaggart treats.

There is nothing immodest in claiming, as I do, that my statement of McTaggart's theories, illustrated with diagrams and provided with a convenient symbolism, is much clearer than his own. McTaggart's system may be compared to the first trans-continental railways in the United States; and my work on it may be compared to the straightenings, levellings, and diversions by which subsequent engineers have improved the original track. The main honour must always be given to the pioneer who made the first survey, and faced the Indians and the buffaloes, the droughts and the floods and the snow-drifts. This does not alter the fact that the present track is an improvement on the old one, and that the engineer who re-surveyed and re-aligned the railway in comparative ease and comfort was doing good work of a humbler kind.

With two exceptions, which I will mention in a moment, I have commented upon everything in Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*. I have, however, deliberately chosen a different order of treatment from that adopted by McTaggart. I take



first those of McTaggart's doctrines which are independent of his own characteristic principles such as Endless Divisibility, Determining Correspondence, etc.; and then I pass on to doctrines which depend upon such principles. One result is that the destructive theory of Time is now followed immediately by McTaggart's constructive theory of the real basis of temporal appearances. I think that this is a definite improvement in the order of exposition.

The two exceptions mentioned above are two passages in which McTaggart criticises, with great courtesy and acuteness, certain theories about time and about physical objects which I had published in my *Scientific Thought*. It seemed to me tedious and impertinent to deal directly with criticisms on what I said in a book published thirteen years ago. It seemed more worth while to state my present views on these two topics at the appropriate places in the course of the argument in this volume. The reader will find in Chaps. xxvii and xliv what I should now say about the material world and our perception of it, and he will find in Chap. xxxv what I should now say (very hesitatingly) about time. I am not much interested in the question whether my present views on these subjects are or are not consistent with those which I published in 1923. In the controversies of party politics, which move at the intellectual level of a preparatory school, it is counted a score against a man if he can be shown ever to have altered his mind on extremely difficult questions in a rapidly changing world. In the less puerile realm of science and philosophy it is not considered disgraceful to learn as well as to live, and this kind of stone has no weight and is not worth throwing.

I have read none of the many articles which have appeared dealing expressly with points in McTaggart's philosophy, and therefore I have no obligations to acknowledge to the writers of them. If I have unwittingly plagiarised any of them, I herewith tender my apologies. On the other hand, I have read with pleasure and profit Mr Gallie's article in *Mind*, No. 177, on "Is the Self a Substance?" This is concerned primarily with the general question of the nature of selves, but incidentally it

refers to and criticises some of McTaggart's arguments on this subject. I found it very helpful when I was re-writing that part of my lectures which became Chap. xxx of the present volume.

In this volume I have not marked any Sections with an asterisk, as I did in Vol. I. This is not because there are no independent discussions of topics treated by McTaggart, but because I think that my criticisms on McTaggart's doctrines are so closely bound up with the independent discussions that the one cannot be understood without the other.

I have pleasure in acknowledging, as before, the courtesy and efficiency of all those at the Cambridge University Press who have been concerned with printing and publishing this book.

Finally I would say that, for me at any rate, the five years which I have spent in wrestling with McTaggart's system and putting the results into writing have been both pleasant and intellectually profitable. I derive a certain satisfaction from reflecting that there is one subject at least about which I probably know more than anyone else in the universe with the possible exception of God (if he exists) and McTaggart (if he survives). But enough is as good as a feast; and I shall now be very glad to turn to other things. *Sat patriae Priamoque datum.*

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November 1936



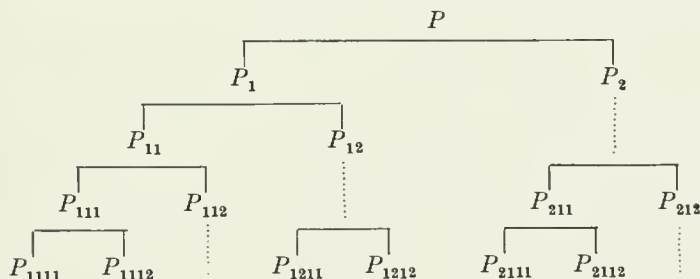
## DIRECTIONS TO THE READER

### (1) Misprints in Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*

- P. xliv, l. 10. For "direction" read "duration".  
 §310, p. 12, l. 9. For "the" read "one".  
 P. 23, Note 1. For "have" read "had".  
 §338, p. 24, l. 28. For "it is" read "is it".  
 §344, p. 28, l. 26. For "subjective" read "objective".  
 §372, p. 55, l. 10. For "argument" read "arguments".  
 §415, p. 99, l. 24. For "perceptions" read "percepta".  
 §429, p. 117, l. 7. For "spiritua" read "spiritual".  
 §514, p. 201, l. 30. Interchange "A" and "X".  
 §523, p. 210, l. 14. Add "?".  
 §589, p. 255, l. 10. For "know" read "have".  
 §703, p. 350, l. 37. For "present" read "past".

### (2) Corrigenda in Vol. I of *Examination of McTaggart's Philosophy*

- P. xliii, l. 7. For "hierarchy" read "hierarchy".  
 P. xliii, l. 37. For "2·4" read "\*2·4".  
 P. 130, l. 2. For "§62" read "§61".  
 P. 374, l. 23. For "S" read "X".  
 P. 381, l. 11. For "P" read " $P_1$ ".  
 P. 431. The diagram does not accurately illustrate the Third Supposition. Substitute for it the following diagram:





## INTRODUCTION

Much hast thou yet to see ; but I perceive  
Thy mortal sight to fail : objects divine  
Must needs impair and weary human sense.  
Henceforth what is to come I will relate :  
Thou therefore give due audience, and attend !  
*Paradise Lost, Book XII*



## INTRODUCTION

The plot of Vol. II of McTaggart's *Nature of Existence* is both exciting and complex. It consists of many different strands, each of which plays an essential part in the argument and is closely interwoven with all the others. This complexity of interlocking parts is, no doubt, a logical and an aesthetic merit. But it cannot be appreciated until the reader has mastered the details of the system and is in a position to contemplate and admire the structure as a whole. In the meanwhile it makes detailed exposition and criticism very difficult. The various strands must be separated and treated successively for this purpose; yet they are so closely interlaced that it is hard to explain and criticise any one of them without referring to others which have not yet been treated.

For this reason I think it is essential to begin by giving the reader at least a rough outline of the story as a whole before I ask him to study my dissections of the detailed arguments. Probably some parts of this outline sketch will not be very intelligible; but I am sure that it will be of some use as an introduction to the rest of this book.

All the more detailed and determinate beliefs which we have about the contents and structure of ourselves and the rest of the world are derived from experience, i.e., from being acquainted with certain particulars which present themselves to us as having such and such characteristics. It is because of what has been manifested to us in the kind of experience called "sense-perception" that we believe there to be extended, figured, spatially related, coloured particulars, which sometimes rest and sometimes move. It is because of what has been manifested to us in the kind of experience called "introspective reflexion" that each of us believes himself to be a person who perceives, introspectively reflects, thinks, wills, acts, enjoys or suffers, and feels various emotions, such as fear, envy, pity, and so on. It is because of both kinds of

experience that each of us believes there to be other persons more or less like himself.

McTaggart uses the name "Perception" to cover every instance of acquaintance with particulars, regardless of whether they are ostensibly material, as in visual and tactual sensation; or ostensibly mental, as in introspective reflexion; or of uncertain status, as in being aware of images. I think it is undesirable to waste a good word, which has a fairly definite and restricted application, by extending it in this way. In the first place, we often want to distinguish between actually perceiving something and merely having an image; yet both are instances of "perceiving" in McTaggart's sense. Again, in discussing the theory of sense-perception it is important to distinguish between the way in which the word "hearing" is used in the two phrases: "I am hearing a booming noise" and "I am hearing the bell". In the former phrase "hearing" means *sensing*; in the latter it means *perceiving*. Yet the former *is*, and the latter *is not*, an instance of "perceiving" in McTaggart's sense.

I think that McTaggart's "perceiving" is exactly equivalent to Russell's "being acquainted with", as confined to particulars. But there is an objection to substituting Russell's phrase for McTaggart's. As McTaggart points out, it is impossible to be acquainted with a particular without its there and then manifesting itself to one as having some characteristic or other. Now McTaggart can express this fact conveniently by saying that, whenever a particular is perceived, it is perceived *as* so-and-so, e.g., as red, as squeaky, as painful, as tinged with envy, and so on. But you cannot say: "This is *acquainted with* as red"; and, as we shall often need to express the kind of fact which McTaggart would express by the phrase: "This is perceived as so-and-so", this is a fatal objection to Russell's term for our purposes.

I propose to substitute the artificial term *Prehension* for "perception" when used in McTaggart's extended sense. I think that this word avoids the objections to "perception" and to "acquaintance", which I have pointed out.

When a person has repeatedly prehended certain particulars



as having a certain characteristic  $C$  he may "form an idea of" that characteristic. That is, he may acquire the power and the disposition to think of it whenever his attention is suitably directed, even though he is not at the time prehending any particular as having it. From ideas which have been formed in this way we can proceed to form ideas of complex characteristics which no particular that we have ever prehended has been prehended as having.

When and only when a person has formed ideas of characteristics he can make judgments and suppositions. Having formed the idea of redness from prehending certain particulars as red, he can proceed to *judge that* a certain particular, which he is now prehending, is red. This is quite different from *prehending it as* red. Again, he can proceed to judge or to suppose that a certain other particular, which he is not now prehending, is or has been or will be red.

Let us call any characteristic which applies or has applied to at least one particular an "exemplified" characteristic; and let us call one which does not apply and never has applied to any particular an "unexemplified" characteristic. *Prima facie* the properties of being a lion or of being a dodo are exemplified characteristics, whilst the property of being a phoenix is an unexemplified one. Now, with regard to some unexemplified characteristics, it seems to be a purely contingent fact that they are unexemplified. Probably there have never been any unicorns, but there is nothing in the characteristic of being a unicorn which would make it impossible that there should be such animals. On the other hand, some characteristics are unexemplified because it is impossible that they should have been exemplified. There could not have been a square particular whose area was exactly equal to that of some circle. I propose to call any characteristic which *could not* have been exemplified, because the very supposition conflicts with some necessary fact, "chimerical". The characteristic of being a square whose side is commensurate with its diagonal is chimerical.

Now it is certain that many people have had ideas of characteristics which were in fact chimerical, and that they

have even believed that such characteristics are exemplified. Any of the numerous people who have produced geometrical constructions for squaring the circle have been in this position. When a person has an idea of a characteristic which is in fact chimerical, and he believes that this characteristic is exemplified, I shall say that this characteristic is "delusive for him". It would not be delusive for a person who realised that the characteristic is chimerical.

There are certain characteristics of which all normal human beings acquire ideas, and which all normal human beings when not engaged in philosophy believe to be exemplified. Everyone acquires the ideas of colour, shape, position, motion, material substance, and so on. And everyone, when not actually philosophising, believes that there are coloured particulars, moving particulars, material particulars, etc. I am going to call such characteristics "ostensibly exemplified".

Now many philosophers have claimed to prove that most of these ostensibly exemplified characteristics are in fact chimerical, i.e., that it is *impossible* that they should belong to *any* particular. If so, these characteristics are delusive for all normal human beings at all times except for a few philosophers at a few moments in their lives. They may therefore be called "delusive" without any qualifying phrase. Berkeley, e.g., professed to show that the characteristic of being an extended continuant is chimerical. There are *extended particulars*, but they must be "ideas" and cannot be continuants. There are *continuants*, but they must be minds and cannot be extended. Now it is certain that all normal people, at all times when they are not philosophising, believe that there are extended continuants. Therefore, if Berkeley is right, the characteristic of being an extended continuant is delusive. Again, if Leibniz is right, the characteristic of being extended is itself delusive. This is even more radical than Berkeley's contention. For every human being is constantly *prehending* particulars as extended, and not merely *believing* that there are extended particulars. Thus, on Leibniz's view, we are all constantly prehending particulars as having a characteristic which no particular could possibly have. We shall find that

McTaggart's view on this point is as radical as Leibniz's and much more sweeping in range.

It is now easy to state the main problems with which McTaggart is concerned in Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*.

(1) The first problem is to consider in turn the most important ostensibly exemplified characteristics, and to decide which, if any, of them are chimerical and therefore delusive. Any ostensibly exemplified characteristic has to pass three tests, one of which is not peculiar to McTaggart's philosophy whilst the other two are. The general test is that the characteristic must not be internally inconsistent, and that the proposition that it is exemplified by some particulars must not conflict with any necessary fact. But this general test, which would be accepted by all philosophers, takes two specific forms in McTaggart's system because of two special principles which he holds to be necessary facts about all particulars. According to McTaggart, as we have seen in Vol. I, every particular must have parts within parts without end in at least one dimension. Therefore, if a characteristic is such that no particular which possessed it would be endlessly divisible in any dimension, it must be dismissed as chimerical, even though there is no other objection to it. Again, as we have seen, McTaggart claims to have shown that the endless divisibility of a particular in a dimension will lead to contradictions unless the conditions summed up in the Principle of Determining Correspondence are fulfilled for that dimension. So, even if an ostensibly exemplified characteristic passes the endless divisibility test, it may fail on the determining correspondence test.

It is desirable at this point to enter a little more fully into the details of the determining correspondence test. Theoretically this might take two forms. (i) You might be able to show that, if a particular had a certain ostensibly exemplified characteristic  $C$ , the only dimensions in which it could be endlessly divisible would be  $D_1$  or  $D_2$  or ...  $D_n$ . And you might be able to show, with respect to each of these dimensions, that the determining correspondence conditions could not be fulfilled. This would be the most rigid form of the test.

(ii) You might be able to show that there is one and only one dimension *D*, *known to human beings*, in which a particular could be endlessly divisible and fulfil the determining correspondence conditions. And you might be able to show that, if a particular had a certain ostensibly exemplified characteristic *C*, it could not have the dimension *D*. This would, of course, leave open the abstract possibility that there is some other dimension *D'*, unknown to any human being, such that a particular could be endlessly divisible in respect of *D'* and fulfil the determining correspondence conditions, and such that the compresence of *C* and *D'* in a particular is not impossible. Now McTaggart always uses the determining correspondence test in the second and weaker form. He claims to show that *we know of* no dimension in respect of which a particular could fulfil both the endless divisibility condition and the determining correspondence condition, except a certain determinate form of *mentality*. He finds it self-evident that no particular which was extended or coloured or massive or movable could also be mental. On these grounds he argues that the characteristic of being a material object and the characteristic of being a sensum are both chimerical. And, since they are both ostensibly exemplified, they are therefore delusive.

(2) The application of these three tests results in a holocaust of ostensibly exemplified characteristics. In the first place, temporal characteristics are dismissed as chimerical by the general test, without surviving to face the ordeal of McTaggart's own special tests. Since all known particulars, whether they be ostensibly mental or ostensibly material or ostensibly sensal, are ostensibly temporal, it follows that every human mind misprehends in a very fundamental way every particular which it prehends. Even those particulars, if any, whose ostensible characteristics pass the endless divisibility test and the determining correspondence test must be profoundly different from what they seem to be.

We can now consider characteristics which are ostensibly exemplified by some, but not by all, particulars. All men, when not doing philosophy, believe (*a*) that some particulars



are noises, smells, colour-expanses, and so on; (b) that some particulars are solid, movable, massive continuants; (c) that some particulars are experiences of one kind or another, e.g., experiences of prehending, of knowing, of believing, of desiring, of emotion, and so on; and (d) that some particulars are minds or selves, i.e., mental continuants. It is true that they do not clearly distinguish in thought between the notion of "sensum", on the one hand, and the notions of "physical event" or "part of the surface of a material continuant", on the other. Therefore they cannot properly be said to believe either that auditory *sensa*, e.g., *are* physical events or that they *are not*. And they cannot properly be said to *believe* or to *disbelieve* that certain visual *sensa* are parts of the surfaces of certain material continuants. But we can truly say that all men, when not actually philosophising, believe there to be particulars of the kind which philosophers call "sensa" and particulars of the kinds which philosophers call "physical events" and "material continuants".

McTaggart holds that men not only *believe that* there are particulars of the kind which philosophers call "sensa" but that they *prehend* certain particulars as having sensible qualities. He holds that men *think* theyprehend particulars of the kind which philosophers call "material continuants", but that they are mistaken in this opinion. They only *believe that* there are such particulars. He does not discuss the case of what philosophers call "physical events"; but I do not doubt that he would hold that men think theyprehend such particulars, and that they are mistaken in this opinion.

As regards ostensibly mental particulars McTaggart's position is as follows. Men believe that they *prehend* particulars which are ostensibly *experiences* of various kinds, and this opinion is correct. On the other hand, whilst everyone believes that there are *minds*, there is no agreement as to whether any man everprehends even his own mind. McTaggart thinks he can prove that, as a matter of fact, each man does *prehend* a certain particular as his own mind or self.

Now the result of applying the tests of endless divisibility and determining correspondence is as follows: (i) On certain

assumptions, which McTaggart claims to justify, minds and prehensive experiences pass both the tests. There is therefore no reason to doubt that some particulars are minds and that some are prehensions. Even these particulars must be very unlike what they are prehended as being. In the first place, they are all prehended as having temporal characteristics, and nothing can have such characteristics. Secondly, they must be in certain other respects considerably different from what they seem to be, or they will not answer to the conditions without which they cannot pass the two tests. Still, even when these delusive features have been eliminated from the particulars which appear to be minds or prehensions, and when they have been replaced by those features which such particulars must have if they are to pass the tests, the real nature is sufficiently like the ostensible nature to justify us in continuing to call these particulars "minds" and "prehensions" respectively.

(ii) Many particulars, which are ostensibly experiences, are ostensibly states of discursive cognition, e.g., of judging, supposing, opining, etc. McTaggart claims to show that no experience could pass his two tests unless it were a prehension. He assumes that no experience which was discursive could *also* be a prehension. Therefore he dismisses as delusive the ostensibly exemplified characteristics of "being an act of judging", "being an act of supposing", and so on. Any experience which seems, on introspection, to be a discursive cognition must in fact be a pure prehension which its owner misprehends as discursive.

(iii) McTaggart claims to show that all ostensibly conative or emotional experiences are also ostensibly cognitive. Some of them are ostensibly prehensive in their cognitive aspect, but many are ostensibly discursive. There is no reason to doubt that the former really have the conative quality or the emotional tone which they seem to have. But the latter must be *prehensions* which are misprehended as *discursive cognitions*, and we cannot safely assume that they really have the emotional or conative qualities which they are prehended as having. Since they are certainly misprehended in their cog-



nitive aspect, they may well be also misprehended in their conative-emotional aspects.

(iv) If a particular had *no other* empirical characteristic beside those which it appears to have when it is prehended as a sensum or believed to be a physical event or a material continuant, it could not pass the two McTaggartian tests. This McTaggart claims to prove. Therefore, on his view, no particular could be a sensum or a physical event or a material continuant unless it had a certain other characteristic, which it is not prehended as having and is not commonly believed to have. This other characteristic would have to be such that the particular can be endlessly divisible and can satisfy the determining correspondence test in respect of it. But minds and prehensions are the only kinds of particular that we know of which could fulfil these conditions. Therefore we have no reason to believe that any particular could be a sensum, or a physical event or a material continuant unless it were *also* a mind or a prehension or a complex whole composed of minds or prehensions or both. Now it appears self-evident to McTaggart that the characteristic of being a mind or an experience or a whole composed of such particulars is *incompatible* with the property of being a noise or being extended or movable or massive. Therefore we have no reason to believe that any particular could be a sensum or a physical event or a material continuant. We have no reason to doubt that these ostensibly exemplified characteristics are all delusive.

The particulars which are prehended as noises, smells, colour-expanses and other kinds of *sensa*, are in these respects misprehended; and the particulars which are believed to be electric sparks or dining-tables and other kinds of physical event or material continuant are in these respects misjudged. They *must* in fact be minds or prehensions or complex wholes composed of such particulars, though they are neither prehended as nor judged to be anything of the kind. And therefore they *cannot* be noises or extended massive movable continuants or events in the latter, although they are prehended as or judged to be such.

(3) After paying to the ruins the tribute of a passing tear,

we may proceed to the next stage in McTaggart's undertaking. It is plain that, if McTaggart is right, the range of human error is enormously greater than any other philosopher had imagined it to be. Each of us is profoundly mistaken, not only about the external world and other people, but about himself and his own experiences. Moreover, error takes the form not of misbelief but of misprehension. Even if there were acts of judging as well as acts of prehending, there would be a great deal of misprehension. For we have ostensible prehensions of particulars as temporal, as extended, as coloured, and so on. And no particular has or can have these characteristics. But, if McTaggart is right in thinking that all our ostensible judgments are really not acts of judging but prehensions, it follows that all ostensible misjudgment is really misprehension. So *all* error consists in prehending particulars as having characteristics which in fact they do not and cannot have. Now, as McTaggart admits, the notion of misprehension, as distinct from misjudgment, is a very difficult one and many people would be inclined to say that it is impossible that a particular which I prehend should fail to have those characteristics which I then prehend it as having.

McTaggart has, therefore, to develop a general theory of Error, which shall make the notion of misprehension intelligible and shall permit all error to be really misprehension. Now much the most pervasive and apparently fundamental of all the ostensibly manifested characteristics which have been condemned as delusive are *temporal* characteristics. If we could explain how particulars, which are all non-temporal, can all be misprehended as temporal, it is plausible to suppose that we should have found the key to the general problem of misprehension. This is the line of attack which McTaggart pursues.

He proceeds on the following postulates: (i) An ostensibly exemplified characteristic must be assumed to be really exemplified unless and until it can be shown to be delusive. (ii) If an ostensibly exemplified characteristic, which is complex, has been shown to be delusive in certain respects only,

it must be assumed not *to be* delusive in those respects in which it has not *been shown to be* so. (iii) Corresponding to any characteristic which is ostensibly exemplified by particulars but is delusive, there must be a characteristic which really is exemplified by those particulars. The delusive characteristic, which they seem to have, is the more or less distorted shadow of a certain characteristic which they really do have. These postulates are not all explicitly stated in this form by McTaggart, but he certainly acts upon them. They are roughly equivalent to Herbart's epigram: "*Wieviel Schein, soviel Hindeutung auf Sein*".

Guided by these postulates, McTaggart argues that what appears to a man as his own mental history really is, as it seems to be, a one-dimensional series of terms generated by a transitive asymmetrical relation. The mistake is to prehend the *terms* as events or states, having dates and durations, and to prehend the *relation* as that of earlier-and-later. The question then arises: "What is the real nature of the terms, and what is the real nature of the relation, which are thus misprehended?" The answer which McTaggart gives to this question constitutes both his general theory of Error and his positive constructive theory of Time and Eternity.

It remains to test the general theory of Error by confronting it with the various standing human errors which have been indicated in the destructive part of the book. Is it compatible with the fact that we misprehend some particulars as *sensa*, that we ostensibly misjudge some to be physical events or material continuants, and that each of us misprehends many of his own experiences as discursive cognitions? McTaggart considers this question in detail, and concludes that his general theory of Error is compatible with the existence of such errors as these.

(4) The outcome of McTaggart's application of the endless divisibility test and the determining correspondence test is that we *can* conceive of a determining correspondence system in which the primary parts are minds, the secondary parts are their prehensive experiences, the determining correspondence relation is "being a prehension of", and the differenti-

ating group of any mind is composed of minds and their prehensive experiences. And we *cannot*, with the empirical materials available to us, think of any other kind of determining correspondence system. Since there certainly are minds and prehensive experiences, and since the universe must in fact be a determining correspondence system, it is reasonable to assume that each mind *is* a primary part of the universe and that the determining correspondence relation *is* "being a prehension of". If we refuse to make this assumption, we can get no further. If we do make it, we can work out its consequences. We may be able to say: "If this assumption (which is certainly possible and reasonable) is true, then the nature, origin, and destiny of minds must be such and such."

Now the upshot of McTaggart's positive theory of Time and Eternity and his general theory of Error is very roughly as follows. Those particulars which are minds or prehensive experiences are divisible, not only in that dimension in respect of which they are members of a determining correspondence system, but also in another dimension. In this latter dimension they do not have parts within parts without end, though they may possibly have an infinite number of *simple* parts. For the present we will refer to this simply as "the second dimension".

Now consider any prehension  $\pi$ , which is a secondary part in the determining correspondence system. According to McTaggart, this will have parts in the second dimension, and some of these parts will be prehensions also. All such parts of  $\pi$  will be prehensions *of* the object of which  $\pi$  is a prehension, and will be experiences *in* the mind in which  $\pi$  is an experience. Now all these prehensions in the same mind of the same object form a series, like a set of Chinese boxes. Of these  $\pi$  contains all the rest; one at most is contained in all the rest; and any other term of the series contains some and is contained in the rest. McTaggart calls such a series of prehensions an "Inclusion Series". He claims to prove that the all-inclusive term, and it alone, in such a series is a perfectly correct (though not necessarily exhaustive) pre-



hension of its object. The other terms are all more or less incorrect prehensions in the same mind of the same object. In particular, all the terms except the all-inclusive one are prehensions of the common object as *temporal*. Thus the residual series which remains when the all-inclusive end-term is removed from an inclusion series may be called a "Misprehension Series".

Now the prehensions which form an inclusion series may themselves be objects of prehensions of a higher order. All the second order prehensions *in* a certain mind of a certain first-order inclusion series form in their turn an inclusion series of the second order. As before, the only member of this series which is a perfectly correct prehension is the all-inclusive term which is a second-grade secondary part in the determining correspondence system. *This* must be a prehension of the first-order series as an *inclusion* series of *non-temporal* terms (which it is), and not as a series of *events* in *temporal succession* (which it is not). Every other term in the second-order inclusion series is a misprehension of the first-order series as a series of events in temporal succession. In every such term of the second-order series the *all-inclusive* term of the first-order series must be prehended as coming either at the *beginning* or at the *end* of time. McTaggart claims to show that it must in fact be prehended as coming at the *end* of time. Again, in every such term of the second-order series the *least inclusive* term of the first-order series must be prehended as coming at the *beginning* of time.

We come now to the application of this to the origin and destiny of minds. Each mind is really timeless; but, in so far as it is misprehended as temporal, it is prehended as having a temporal history which occupies the whole of time. This is the truth of which the doctrine of human immortality and pre-existence is the popular and distorted expression. McTaggart argues that this apparently world-long temporal history is apparently sub-divided into a series of successive lives. This is the truth underlying the ancient doctrine of reincarnation. Lastly, the confused and embarrassed popular view that Heaven is a state of perfect felicity which "begins

at the end of time and then goes on for ever'' is a distorted expression of a genuine fact. In so far as any inclusion series is misprehended as the temporal history of a mind, its all-inclusive end-term (which is really a timeless state of perfectly correct prehension) is prehended as a future event which will succeed all the other events in the history and will have no successor. It will become present only at the end of time, and it will never become past.

(5) Having thus determined many important facts about the nature, origin, and destiny of minds, McTaggart proceeds to attack a final problem, viz., that of value in the universe. He begins with a general discussion of value, and of the characteristics which make things valuable or disvaluable. Then he considers, in the light of this, what kinds and what degree of value attach to the following: (i) the all-inclusive end-term of an inclusion series which appears *sub specie temporis* as the world-long history of a mind; (ii) the rest of such a series, taken without its all-inclusive end-term; (iii) the whole of such a series; and (iv) the stretch of such a series which intervenes between the term which appears *sub specie temporis* as now present and the all-inclusive end-term. Putting these questions into loose popular language, we may restate them as follows. What kinds and what degree of value are there (i) in the state of a mind which has reached and is enjoying Heaven; (ii) in its world-long earthly history; (iii) in the whole composed of its world-long earthly history succeeded by its state in Heaven; and (iv) in the part of its history which will intervene between its present state and its attainment of Heaven at the end of time?



## BOOK VI

### THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Within the visible diurnal sphere:  
Standing on earth, not rap'd above the Pole,  
More safe I sing with mortal voice; unchang'd  
To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days,  
On evil days though fall'n and evil tongues;  
In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round.  
*Paradise Lost, Book VII*

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#### ARGUMENT OF BOOK VI

There are certain psychological and epistemological doctrines which are fundamental, in a perfectly definite sense, to the system of constructive metaphysics which McTaggart tries to build in Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*. They are fundamental, in the sense that they are (a) logically independent of his own special principles, such as the Endless Divisibility of Particulars, the Principle of Determining Correspondence, and the Unreality of Time; and (b) that, when added to his special principles, they are the premises from which the rest of the system is supposed to follow. It is therefore desirable to collect them together and treat them in the first Book of our second volume.

In Chaps. xxv to xxix, inclusive, I treat of McTaggart's classification of the various kinds of ostensible experiences, and his account of each kind. Chap. xxv deals with his classification of what he calls "Cogitations". Chap. xxvi is concerned with that kind of ostensible cogitation which McTaggart calls "Perception" and I prefer to call "Prehension". This is absolutely fundamental in McTaggart's system;

for, in the end, he claims to show that all other kinds of experience are *also* cogitations, and that all cogitations are *really* prehensions, though many of them seem not to be prehensions but to be other kinds of cogitation.

In Chap. xxvii I deal rather elaborately in my own way with ostensible sense-perception, because I think that this brings out clearly the distinction between "perception", in McTaggart's sense, and "perception" in what I believe to be the proper sense. The results of this chapter will be useful when we come to consider McTaggart's doctrine that no particular can be material and that no particular can have sensible qualities.

In Chaps. xxviii and xxix I explain and discuss McTaggart's doctrines of Volition and Emotion, respectively; and in the latter I consider in detail his account of the emotion of Love, which is very important in his system. In Chap. xxix I also discuss his doctrine of ostensible Pleasure-Pain.

Finally, in Chap. xxx I consider elaborately his doctrine of the Self and of ostensible Self-knowledge; and, in the end, I reject his claim to have proved that every human self from time to time prehends itself as such.

## CHAPTER XXV

### CLASSIFICATION OF OSTENSIBLE EXPERIENCES: OSTENSIBLE COGITATIONS

McTaggart's account of ostensibly mental particulars is interesting and important on its own account, quite apart from its position in his system of philosophy. It is logically independent of his characteristic doctrines of the Endless Divisibility of Particulars, the Principle of Determining Correspondence, and the Unreality of Time. Therefore it seems best to begin with this topic.

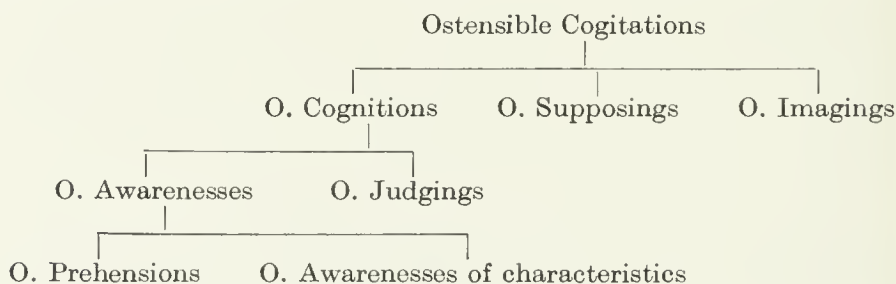
There are two kinds of ostensibly mental particulars, viz., ostensible Minds or Selves and ostensible Experiences. I shall devote this chapter and its four successors to McTaggart's psychological analysis and classification of ostensible experiences, and I shall consider his account of ostensible selfhood and ostensible self-consciousness in Chap. xxx.

The familiar tripartite division classifies ostensible experiences into ostensible cognitions, ostensible conations, and ostensibly affective states. We shall find that McTaggart would regard this as a cross-division. For, on his view, *all* kinds of ostensible experiences, whatever else they may be, are also and fundamentally cognitive. For the present we will set aside the other ostensible kinds of experiences, and will confine ourselves to those which are ostensibly cognitive. McTaggart calls all these "Cogitations", and he confines the name "Cognition" to a certain sub-class of cogitations. (*Nature of Existence*, Chap. xxxvii.)

#### 1. Classification of Ostensible Cogitations.

Among ostensibly cogitative experiences McTaggart distinguishes (i) ostensible prehensions of particulars, i.e. "Perceptions", in his sense; (i) ostensible states of acquaintance

with characteristics; (iii) ostensible judgments; (iv) ostensible supposings, or, as he calls them, "Assumptions", i.e., what Meinong called *Annahmen*; and (v) ostensible imagings. (I use the word "judging" in preference to McTaggart's word "judgment" to make it perfectly clear that it is the name of an experience and not of a proposition.) McTaggart groups together ostensible prehensions of particulars and ostensible states of acquaintance with characteristics under the head of "Awarenesses". He groups together ostensible awarenesses and ostensible judgments under the name of "Cognitions". So his classification of Ostensible Cogitations may be summarised in the table below:



I think we may assume that McTaggart regarded this classification as an exhaustive sub-division into mutually exclusive sub-classes. I am very doubtful whether it fulfils either condition. It will be best, however, to defer discussion of this question until we have seen exactly what McTaggart means by the various items in his list.

We have already seen what McTaggart means by "Perceptions", and why it seems desirable to substitute the name "Prehensions" for them. There is no difficulty in understanding what McTaggart means by "Awareness of characteristics". An instance of it would be the idea of redness which is occurring in a normal man's mind when he is judging or supposing that so-and-so is red, and is not using the word "red" descriptively, e.g., as an abbreviation for "the colour that normal people are aware of when light of a certain wave-length affects their eyes". A man born blind could not have "awareness", in McTaggart's sense, of any colour-quality; a normal man could, and presumably often

does have awareness of such qualities. Again, there is no mystery about what McTaggart means by "Judgings" and "Supposings". Judging is believing or disbelieving propositions with more or less conviction. And we are told in §421 that the internal structure of a supposing is the same as that of a judging; the only difference is that a judging is an asserting, whilst a supposing is not. I think that the difference may be expressed more satisfactorily as follows. A man may suppose what is true or suppose what is false, just as he may judge truly or judge falsely. But, if he *judges* falsely he will be deceived or mistaken; whilst he may *suppose* what is false without being deceived or mistaken.

The one item in McTaggart's list which is not obvious in meaning is "Imaging". McTaggart discusses this in §§422 to 424, inclusive. The discussion seems to me to be highly confused, and we must clear this matter up before going further.

1.1. *McTaggart's Account of "Imaging"*. We must first see what McTaggart intends the word "imaging" to cover. He says that he can image a red disc on a white ground, though he is not seeing one. He can image toothache as being felt by him at a time when he is not in fact feeling toothache. He can image Cromwell's distrust for Charles I (which presumably did exist), and he can equally image Cromwell's contempt for the Young Pretender (which certainly did not exist). All these are given as examples of imaging. And what is imaged in each case is to be called an "Imaginum".

McTaggart deliberately refuses to use the word "imagining", because it is so very ambiguous. It is sometimes used as equivalent to "believing falsely", as when we say of a lunatic that he imagines himself to be Napoleon. Again, it is sometimes used to mean "supposing, and working out the consequences of the supposition". An example would be imagining what one would have done if one had been Mr Lloyd George at the Versailles Conference. In such cases of "imagining" there need be no "imaging", though it is very likely that there will be some. On the other hand, there could be "imaging" without "imagining" in either of these senses. Suppose that I image a certain cat, and remember



that I stroked that cat yesterday. Then I should not say that I am "imagining" the cat.

According to McTaggart, imagings resemble prehensions and differ from judgments and supposings in the following respect. An *imaginatum*, like a *prehensum*, is always a particular: and it is always imaged *as* having certain characteristics, just as a *prehensum* is always prehended as having certain characteristics. But imaging is not discursive, as judging and supposing are. We should not say: "I image *that* this has the characteristic *C*"; but we should say: "I judge *that* (or I suppose *that*) this has *C*."

There is, however, on McTaggart's view, a certain respect in which imaging resembles supposing and differs from both prehending and judging. If I prehend *S* as having *P* or judge that *S* has *P*, I am *mistaken* unless *S* does in fact have *P*. But, if I image *S* as having *P*, I need not be mistaken even though *S* in fact does not have *P*. Similarly, if I suppose that *S* has *P*, I need not be mistaken even though *S* in fact does not have *P*.

The next point which McTaggart makes about imaging is that we can image only such things as we could prehend, viz., *sensa* such as we sense and experiences such as we introspect. We do indeed talk as if we sometimes image material objects and physical events; though, if McTaggart is right, we could not possibly *prehend* such objects even if there were any such. We might, e.g., talk of "imaging the destruction of Westminster Abbey by hostile aircraft"; yet, on McTaggart's view, even a person who had the sort of experience which he would describe as "actually witnessing" this event would be prehending, not *it*, but only certain visual and auditory *sensa*. McTaggart holds that the correct statement would be: "I am *imaging* *sensa* of such a kind that anyone who was actually *sensing* them would properly be said to be witnessing the destruction of Westminster Abbey by hostile aircraft".

In §423 McTaggart mentions a certain apparent difficulty in connexion with imaging, and in §424 he professes to solve it. The difficulty and the solution throw some further light on his notion of imaging.

The difficulty is as follows. It is quite certain that, whenever I image, I image *something*. This something is called the "imaginatum" of this state of imaging, and it is certainly different from the imaging of which it is the object. Again, the imaginatum is always a particular, which is imaged as having such and such a characteristic. Now McTaggart has said that it is possible to image Cromwell's contempt for the Young Pretender, though Cromwell never had the experience of despising Charles Edward. What is the imaginatum of this state of imaging? If you say that it is a particular which *has* the characteristic of being an experience in Cromwell's mind of contempt for the Young Pretender, the answer is that there is no such particular. If you say that it is a particular which *has not* this characteristic, then *every* actual particular is in that position and it is difficult to see what claim *any* of them has to be regarded as the imaginatum of *this* imaging.

McTaggart's solution is the following. Really there are no imagings. Those experiences which are ostensibly imagings are really prehensions, which are introspectively misprehended as imagings. When I am ostensibly imaging Cromwell's contempt for the Young Pretender I am really *prehending* a certain actual particular, and I am *misprehending* it as being Cromwell's contempt for the Young Pretender. It cannot really have this characteristic, for no particular has it. Further, I am introspectively misprehending this misprehension of mine; for it appears to me on introspection as a state of imaging, which it is not, instead of appearing as a state of prehension, which it is. As McTaggart puts it, there is error *in* the experience and there is error *about* the experience. There would be this kind of error about the experience in every case of ostensible imaging, but there need not always be error in the experience. For the prehension which is introspectively misprehended as an imaging need not in all cases be itself a misprehension.

Now we shall see later that McTaggart thinks he can show that all other ostensible kinds of cogitation, e.g., judgments, supposings, etc., are really prehensions which are introspectively misprehended. But to prove this for each of them he

has to use his own special principles of Endless Divisibility and Determining Correspondence. Ostensible imagings are unique in that McTaggart claims to show, without appeal to his own special principles, that they are introspectively misprehended prehensions. The argument here is that there is no other way of explaining how we can ostensibly image such imaginata as Cromwell's contempt for the Young Pretender.

Some further information about imaging is to be found in §425 and in Chap. LVI, §673 to the end. When one is ostensibly remembering, one is (a) imaging something, and (b) judging, rightly or wrongly, that one has prehended in the past the particular which one is imaging now, and that the characteristics which one now images it as having are those which one then prehended it as having. This is not a definition of "remembering"; for these two conditions might be fulfilled when one's judgment was based entirely on inference or on information from other people, and one would certainly not be said to be "remembering" in such circumstances. McTaggart does not profess to state positively what it is that distinguishes memory-judgments from other judgments which fulfil conditions (a) and (b).

Passing to Chap. LVI, we learn that an ostensible imaging may be a prehension of a particular which is, *sub specie temporis*, an event in the past or in the future. In remembering, one is prehending retrospectively, with more or less accuracy, an event which one prehended simultaneously when it was happening. In §677 McTaggart throws out a very interesting suggestion. It is conceivable, he thinks, that we may ostensibly image events which, *sub specie temporis*, we never have ostensibly prehended because they are still future. Our ostensible imaging of such events would be, *sub specie temporis*, an introspectively misprehended pre-prehension of an event which has not yet happened. In view of the fact that there is fairly good evidence that non-inferential precognitions sometimes happen (see Saltmarsh, "Report on Apparent Cases of Precognition", S.P.R. *Proceedings*, Vol. XLII) this suggestion of McTaggart's becomes more than an idle speculation.

Can it be maintained that every imaging that I ever experience is, *sub specie temporis*, either (a) a post-prehension of some event which I have already simultaneously prehended, or (b) an introspectively misprehended simultaneous prehension of some present event, or (c) a pre-prehension of some event which I shall simultaneously prehend when it happens? In defence of this suggestion there are two points to be noted. (i) An imaging may in fact be a post-prehension of an event which I have already simultaneously prehended, and yet I may not know or believe that it is so. Thus our class (a) might include many imagings which are not associated with remembering. (ii) The event which is post-prehended, or simultaneously prehended, or pre-prehended may, in either case, be grossly misprehended. Thus the fact that an *imaginationum* was extremely unlike anything that the imaging subject ever ostensibly prehends in the whole course of his history would not prove that the imaging could not fall into one of the three classes.

But, even when this is admitted, it is very difficult to believe that my imaging of Cromwell's contempt for the Young Pretender is either a retrospective misprehension of some past event, or a simultaneous misprehension of some present event, or a prospective misprehension of some future event. McTaggart fully admits this, and in §§ 675 and 676 he puts forward an alternative account of such imagings. The alternative is as follows.

Very often ostensible imaging is preceded and conditioned by ostensible judging or supposing. If I am reading Roman history, I may judge that Caesar was murdered and I may then try to image his murder. If I am thinking about the French Revolution, I may make the supposition that George III was guillotined in Berkeley Square and I may try to image this supposed event. Now it seems certain that, in such cases, the imaging is in some sense "based upon" certain memories. I may remember a picture of George III, on horseback and not being guillotined; I may remember Berkeley Square, as I last saw it, with taxi-cabs and no king or guillotine; and I may remember a guillotine which I have



seen out of action at Madame Tussaud's. I tend to ignore those features in the remembered objects which are incompatible with the supposition in which I am interested at the time, and to concentrate on those features which are compatible with it.

Now these ostensible rememberings are really three different post-prehensions of three different objects. They would not appear as *imagings* at all unless they were to some extent misprehended introspectively. But this introspective misprehension may go so far that the three different post-prehensions of three different objects are prehended as *a single imaging* of *a single* complex imaginatum. This is what happens, according to McTaggart, when we succeed in ostensibly imaging George III being executed in Berkeley Square. If we do not introspectively misprehend our own post-prehensions to this extent, we succeed only in ostensibly imaging George III on horseback, Berkeley Square with taxi-cabs and no guillotine, and a guillotine in Madame Tussaud's, and recognising that certain features in each are irrelevant to the supposal which we are at present making.

On McTaggart's view then, if I succeed in ostensibly imaging George III's execution in Berkeley Square, I am not misprehending any actual particular as being the event which answers to this description. I am introspectively misprehending three of my own more or less correct post-prehensions to such an extent that I prehend them as a single imaging of a single complex event answering to this description.

1.11. *Criticism of McTaggart's Account of Imaging.* I think that the shortest and simplest way of criticising McTaggart's account of imaging is to begin by stating what seems to me to be the true account of it.

(i) Whatever else may be involved in imaging it certainly involves being acquainted with visual, auditory, or other images. Now these are particulars, and therefore acquaintance with them is prehension.

(ii) McTaggart does not give a name to the experience of prehending an image. It is important to notice that what he calls "imaging" is *not* just prehending an image, and that



what he calls an "imaginatum" is *not* a prehended image. He talks, e.g., of imaging *sensa*, and asserts that this is what we are really doing when we say that we are imaging physical events or material objects. (Cf. *Nature of Existence*, Vol. II, bottom of p. 107.)

(iii) When an image is prehended it is prehended as qualified in various ways, e.g., as squeaky, as red, as consisting of a red triangle in a blue circle, and so on. If I am asked to describe an image which I am prehending, I do so by means of judgments whose predicates are the characteristics which I prehend the image as having. I propose to call such judgments "inspective"; they are seldom made except by psychologists or others who are interested in images as such.

(iv) All that I have said so far about images and the prehension of them could be paralleled precisely about *sensa* and the sensing of them. The psychologist or the artist can make inspective judgments about the *sensa* which he senses; and the predicates of these judgments will be the characteristics which he prehends these *sensa* as having. Now, when a person senses a *sensum*, this experience is often an essential factor in an altogether different and much more complicated experience which I will call "ostensibly perceiving a physical event or a material thing". To use the happy expression of Prof. Price, he "perceptually accepts" the *sensum* as a certain physical event or as a part of the surface of a certain material thing. The event is taken to be happening *now*, and the material thing is taken to be *now* existing and present to his senses. If he makes a judgment corresponding to this experience of perceptual acceptance, it will not be an inspective judgment. It will be of the form: "That is a flash of lightning", "That is a penny", "That is a clap of thunder", and so on. These may be called "perceptual judgments". McTaggart does not distinguish between perceptual acceptance and perceptual judgments; but he is quite clear that ostensible perception of physical events and material things, i.e., ostensible sense-perception, is *not* prehension, and is therefore not "perception" in his sense of the word. Perceptual acceptance may be erroneous, either in detail or in

principle; but, if it is, the error does not consist in misprehehding the characteristics of a particular which one is prehehding.

(v) Now McTaggart does not explicitly draw a similar distinction between prehehding an image and taking it as an image *of* so-and-so. This distinction is certainly implicit in the fact that the imaginatum is not the prehehded image. But McTaggart fails to follow this clue, and this is the source of his difficulties about imaging Cromwell's contempt for the Young Pretender. He seems to be constantly hovering round the point, especially in §§675 and 676, but never quite reaching it.

I may just prehend an image without taking it to be an image of anything. This is probably much more frequent than sensing a sensum without perceptually accepting it as a physical event or a part of a material object. On the other hand, unless I am in a very confused state and mistake the image for a sensum, I never perceptually accept it as a present physical event or as a part of a material object which is now present to my senses.

Sometimes, when I prehend an image I take it to be an image *of* a certain past experience of mine. The image can then be called an "ostensible memory-image". If I make a judgment corresponding to this present experience, it will be of the form: "I had such and such an experience in the past." This is an "ostensible memory-judgment". Such judgments may be true or false; but they are certainly not inspective judgments, and, if they are false, it is not because I have prehehded a particular and misprehehded its characteristics.

(vi) As McTaggart points out, I am often caused to prehend a certain image by the fact that I have previously made a certain judgment or supposition. I can, e.g., make the supposition that Westminster Abbey will be destroyed by hostile aircraft. If I have seen the Abbey and aeroplanes and bombing-practice, I can, provided I am a good visualiser, thereupon prehend a complex image, with regard to which I judge that it resembles fairly closely the *sensa* which a man

would sense if he were witnessing such an event as I am supposing to take place.

There is no question here of a particular being prehended as having characteristics which no particular has. There are the following four items: (a) a certain complex image which I am prehending; (b) my experience of prehending it; (c) my experience of supposing that the Abbey will be destroyed by hostile aircraft; and (d) my experience of believing that this image resembles the sensum which a man would sense if he witnessed such an event as I am supposing. So far as I can see, there is no reason to hold that I am prehending a certain particular and *mis*prehending it as being the destruction of the Abbey by hostile aircraft. No difficulty seems to be raised here which is not raised by the existence of suppositions that are not in accordance with fact.

What are we to say about imaging Cromwell's contempt for the Young Pretender? It is plain that the initial factor here is the experience of supposing that Cromwell had been contemporary with Charles Edward, had met him, and had felt contempt for him. If I have seen pictures of Cromwell and of the Young Pretender, and am a good visualiser, this state of supposing may bring about a state of prehending a certain complex image which I believe to resemble the sensum that a person would have sensed if he had seen a man like Cromwell turning up his nose at a man like Charles Edward. In addition I may have a faint feeling which I judge to resemble feelings that *I* had when *I* was regarding someone with contempt, and I may believe that Cromwell would have had this kind of feeling if he had been regarding someone with contempt. In all this there need be no misprehension, either introspective or non-introspective, and there need be no false judgment.

(vii) To sum up. Ostensible imaging, in McTaggart's sense of the word, certainly *involves* prehension of a particular, viz., an image, just as ostensible sense-perception *involves* prehension of a particular, viz., a sensum. But, even when what is imaged is the destruction of Westminster Abbey or Cromwell's contempt for the Young Pretender, there is no

reason to hold that *this* particular is misprehended. It is prehended simply as a certain arrangement of coloured images, which it is; and not as the destruction of the Abbey or as Cromwell's contempt, which it is not and is never even thought to be.

Just as ostensible sense-perception involves something beside prehending a sensum, so ostensible imaging involves something beside prehending an image. It involves a judgment, or quasi-judgment, about the image; viz., that it resembles the *sensa* that a normal man would sense if certain supposed conditions were fulfilled. This judgment may or may not be correct; but it is not rendered false by the fact that the supposed conditions are not fulfilled. The total experience is initiated and sustained by a supposition; but this, from the nature of the case, is neither correct nor incorrect. Thus there need be no error *in* the experience of imaging the destruction of the Abbey or Cromwell's contempt, in spite of the fact that the Abbey has not been destroyed and that Cromwell never felt contempt for the Young Pretender.

Again, it has not been proved that there must be introspective misprehension *of* the experience in order that it may appear as an imaging. The prehension of the image appears on introspection as a prehension; the supposition about Cromwell or the Abbey appears on introspection as a supposition; and the judgment about the image appears on introspection as a judgment. It is true that McTaggart claims to show that ostensible suppositions and ostensible judgments are introspectively misprehended prehensions. But, in order to do this, he has to appeal to his own special principles of Endless Divisibility and Determining Correspondence. Now he claimed to prove that ostensible imagings are introspectively misprehended prehensions *without* appeal to these special principles. This claim is evidently baseless; it rests on nothing but imperfect analysis of the experience of ostensible imaging.

*A fortiori* we may dismiss as baseless McTaggart's fantastic theory that, when I succeed in ostensibly imaging George III's execution in Berkeley Square, I am introspectively misprehending three of my own more or less correct post-prehensions



to such an extent that I prehend them as a single imaging of a single complex event answering to this description. This theory was suggested only as a more tolerable alternative to the theory that I am misprehending some actual particular as being an event of this description. The analysis of imaging which I have given shows that we have no occasion to make a choice between these two alternatives.

1.2. *Criticism of McTaggart's Classification.* We are now in a position to consider whether McTaggart's classification of ostensible cogitations is exhaustive, and whether its divisions are mutually exclusive.

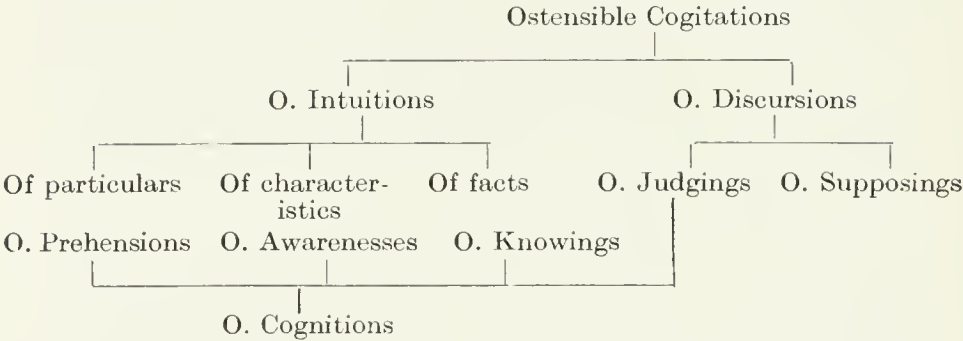
(i) It will be noticed that sense-perception does not appear as an entry in the list. McTaggart would, no doubt, say that ostensible sense-perception is found on analysis to be composed of ostensible prehension of sensa and ostensible judgments about physical events or material things founded upon such prehensions. If this be admitted, I would make the following criticism. Either ostensible sense-perception should be put in or ostensible imaging should be left out. For we have seen that ostensible imaging is analysable into prehension of images and certain suppositions and judgments. Since McTaggart failed to make this analysis, it was consistent *for him* to include imaging and omit sense-perception. But it would not be consistent for us to do so.

(ii) There is no entry in the list for experience of Knowing. Possibly McTaggart regarded knowing as a species of judging. If so, I am fairly certain that he was mistaken. I would suggest that knowing is being acquainted with facts, and that it should therefore be entered as a third item along with prehension of particulars and awareness of characteristics.

I would therefore suggest the following classification of ostensible cogitations as an alternative to McTaggart's. I would first divide them into Ostensible Intuitions and Ostensible Discursions. Then I would divide the ostensibly discursive cogitations into Ostensible Judgings and Ostensible Supposings. And I would divide the ostensibly intuitive cogitations into Intuitions of particulars (Ostensible Prehensions), Intuitions of characteristics (Ostensible Awarenesses),



and Intuitions of facts (Ostensible Knowings). Finally, I would class together as Ostensible Cognitions the four items Ostensible Prehensions, Ostensible Awarenesses, Ostensible Knowings, and Ostensible Judgings. The proposed classification is exhibited in the table given below :



## CHAPTER XXVI

### CERTAIN KINDS OF OSTENSIBLE COGITATION: (I) OSTENSIBLE PREHENSION

Before considering McTaggart's classification of other forms of ostensible experiences, we will consider in some detail his psychological and epistemological account of certain important kinds of ostensible cogitation. In this chapter I shall deal with Ostensible Prehension, and in the next with Ostensible Sense-perception.

#### 1. McTaggart's Account of Prehension.

Prehension is of the utmost importance in McTaggart's system, for he proposes to show that all other ostensible forms of experience are really prehensions. It is therefore desirable to devote a chapter to his detailed account of prehension.

(i) We have already seen that prehension is acquaintance with particulars; and that, in prehending any particular, we always prehend it as characterised in such and such ways. We have seen that it is one thing to prehend a particular as so-and-so, e.g., as red, and another thing to judge that this particular is so-and-so, e.g., red. What I have called an "inspective judgment" about a particular is a judgment by a person who is prehending that particular; its subject is the prehended particular; and its predicate is some characteristic which he prehends the particular as having. If it be admitted that misprehension is possible, the distinction between prehending a particular as so-and-so and judging it to be so-and-so becomes specially obvious. A philosopher who is convinced that temporal characteristics are chimerical goes on *prehending* his own experiences as temporal, though he *judges* them to be non-temporal.

(ii) There can be misprehension. A particular which I prehend can be prehended by me as having characteristics

which do not in fact characterise it. It can even be prehended as having chimerical characteristics, i.e., ones which *could not* characterise anything. This is essential if McTaggart's account of things as they are is to be reconciled with the admitted appearances. It is *not* essential to his doctrine that "being a prehension of" is a possible relation of determining correspondence. For, as we shall see later, he claims to prove that all prehensions which are terms in a determining-correspondence hierarchy are *perfectly correct* so far as they go.

McTaggart admits that the notion of misprehension is extremely paradoxical, and that many people would reject the suggestion off-hand as meaningless verbiage. His defence of it is one of the crucial points in his theory of Time and Error, and we must defer consideration of it for the present. In the meanwhile we must simply grant him as a postulate the possibility that there may be misprehension.

Before passing to the next topic we may note a statement which McTaggart makes in §407. He remarks that, so far as he can see, the characteristics which a prehended particular is prehended as having on any occasion need not be enough to constitute a sufficient description of it. *A fortiori* a particular can be prehended without being prehended as having all the characteristics, or even all the original qualities, which it in fact has.

(iii) We come now to three properties which prehensions must have or be capable of having if it is to be possible for the relation "being a prehension of" to be a determining-correspondence relation. (a) It must be possible for a mind to prehend another mind and parts of another mind. (b) If a mind prehends anything, its prehension of that thing must be a part of itself. (c) It must be possible for a prehension of a part of a whole to be a part of a prehension of that whole. These conditions do not suffice to make "being a prehension of" a determining-correspondence relation; but, unless they are all fulfilled, it could not possibly be such a relation. We will now discuss them in turn.

1.1. *Can a Mind prehend another Mind and its Experiences?*  
McTaggart's discussion of this question is to be found in §§384

and 385. It is certain that ordinary men in their everyday life do notprehend objects which *seem* to them to be the minds or the experiences of other people. Each man ostensibly prehends many particulars which seem to him to be *sensa* of various kinds, many which seem to him to be images, and many which seem to him to be *his own* experiences. If McTaggart is right, he also ostensibly prehends *his own* mind; and, though many psychologists would not admit this, many would agree or would regard it as an open question. All the objects which any normal man prehends in everyday life seem to fall into one or other of these classes. McTaggart says that some mystics claim to have prehended other men's minds or experiences, and to have prehended them *as* such. But he thinks that they were probably mistaken in this claim.

Still, there is nothing conclusive in all this negative evidence. If we admit the possibility of misprehension, the negative facts adduced would be quite consistent with the view that each of us quite often prehends particulars which *are in fact* other men's minds or experiences. It would be enough to suppose that, whenever we doprehend such particulars, we fail toprehend them *as* other men's minds or experiences and *misprehend* them as being of a different nature.

Actually, however, people who say that no one couldprehend any other man's mind or experiences do not rely on this negative empirical evidence. They would claim to see, or to prove from self-evident premises, that such prehension is ontologically impossible.

If it were held to be self-evidently impossible that one and the same particular should be prehensible by two or more minds, it could be inferred that no mind canprehend any other mind or its experiences. For the mind *B* and its experiences are prehensible by *B* itself. Therefore, if *B* and its experiences were prehensible by the mind *A*, they would be prehensible by at least two minds. And, according to the premise, it is self-evidently impossible that *any* particular should be prehensible by two minds. McTaggart quite rightly denies that the premise of this argument is self-evident; and,

however this may be, it seems certain that the doctrine which we are discussing has not been reached by an inference of this kind. As McTaggart points out, no one feels any difficulty in admitting it to be possible that one and the same sensum should be prehended by two or more minds, *unless* he already holds independently that *sensa* are states of mind.

I agree entirely with this. I would make only the following additional remark. If *sensa* are not states of mind, we can still, I think, show that it is almost certain that no two minds ever sense the same sensum. But the argument has to use empirical premises, and it can do no more than make the conclusion extremely probable.

It would seem then that those who hold that a person can never prehend a particular which is in fact the mind of another person or an experience of another person must find this proposition self-evident. McTaggart says that he does not find it self-evident, and he suggests a cause which may have led others to think that they do so. The suggestion is as follows.

It is self-evidently impossible that an experience which is *owned by* a mind *A* should also be owned by another mind *B*. Suppose that a person failed to distinguish between "being an experience owned by *A*" and "being an experience prehended by *A*". Then he would think that it is self-evidently impossible that an experience which is prehended by *A* should also be prehended by another mind *B*. Now such a confusion might easily arise. For, in normal life, as we have seen, every particular which *A* prehends as an experience is in fact an experience which *A* owns. Yet reflexion shows clearly that "being an experience owned by *A*" and "being an experience prehended by *A*" are not two different names for a single property. Moreover, there are facts and arguments which make it very probable that *A* owns experiences which he never prehends. If so, "being an experience owned by *A*" and "being an experience prehended by *A*" are not even co-extensive in application, and therefore *a fortiori* are not identical in meaning.

I will now make some comments on this question and on



McTaggart's answer to it. (i) I am sure that the confusion, which McTaggart points out, is often made. I used to make it myself at one time, and I still find highly intelligent undergraduates making it. Once one has seen through it, it is hard to see how one could ever have failed to do so; but this is a common experience in philosophy. But there are two remarks to be made about it. (a) Even if it explains how people come to think it self-evidently impossible that *A* should prehend an *experience* of *B*'s, it does not explain why they should think it self-evidently impossible for one mind to prehend another *mind*. (b) A person might see clearly that "being an experience prehend<sup>ed</sup> by *A*" and "being an experience owned by *A*" are names of different characteristics. And he might be persuaded that there are probably experiences which *A* does not prehend and does own. Yet he might still claim to see that the former characteristic conveys the latter, as being coloured conveys being extended. To such a man McTaggart could only answer that he does not see this.

(ii) As regards experiences my own position is as follows. If what we call "*B*'s experiences" are particulars, as McTaggart assumes, I can see no metaphysical impossibility in *A*'s prehend<sup>ing</sup> such particulars. It is admitted that *A* can prehend particulars which, in all probability, are not his own experiences, viz., *sensa*. So not being an experience of *A*'s does not exclude being prehend<sup>ed</sup> by *A*. Again, it is admitted that *A* prehend<sup>s</sup> some of his own experiences. So being an experience does not exclude being prehend<sup>ed</sup> by *A*. Thus an opponent of McTaggart would have to maintain that, although *A* can prehend particulars which are *not his own experiences*, and although *A* can prehend particulars which *are experiences*, yet it is self-evident that he cannot prehend particulars which *are experiences* but are *not his own*. Of course this might be so; but I do not find it self-evident or even very plausible.

(iii) If McTaggart is right in thinking that a mind can prehend itself, then I can see no *a priori* impossibility in one mind prehend<sup>ing</sup> another. We shall deal with the antecedent of this conditional statement in Chap. xxx of the present

work. In the meanwhile I will only record a doubt as to whether one could possiblyprehend *any* continuant, such as a mind or a material thing, in the sense in which one canprehend an experience or a sensum. Even on the most naively realistic view of visual or tactual perception one does not literallyprehend a material object which one is seeing or touching. At most one prehends a certain part of its surface as characterised in certain ways at the present time. McTaggart, of course, would not accept anything like so naive a view of ostensible sense-perception. Yet he seems to be content with something even more childlike and bland when he claims that one mind canprehend another.

(iv) The question may well be raised: "What bearing, if any, have alleged supernormal phenomena, such as sporadic cases of telepathy in normal people or the frequent supernormal knowledge displayed by mediums in trance, on the question under discussion?" I may say at once that I have no doubt that the evidence accumulated by the Society for Psychical Research in the fifty years of its activity makes it necessary to admit the reality of such phenomena. I do not, however, think that any of the established supernormal facts forces us to postulate telepathic prehension by one mind of another mind or of another mind's experiences. I do not think that this postulate is even particularly helpful in explaining the facts. Telepathic *interaction* of one mind on another may have to be postulated; and so too may "telepathic *discursive cognition*", as I have called it. But I see very little reason to postulate telepathic *prehension*. I have discussed this question fully in my Presidential Address to the Society for Psychical Research, which will be found in Vol. XLIII of the *Proceedings* by any reader who is interested in the matter.

1.2. *Are Prehensions parts of the Mind which is prehending?* Even if it be admitted that a mind canprehend some of the *experiences* of another mind, it will not follow that it canprehend *parts* of another mind unless the experiences which a mind owns are parts of that mind. For this and for other reasons it is important for McTaggart to show that prehensions

are parts of the mind which is prehending. If he can show this to be true of prehensions, it will suffice; for he claims to be able to prove that all the various ostensible kinds of experiences are in fact prehensions.

The question may best be put in the following form: "When a mind  $M$  is prehending an object  $O$ , is the right analysis of the situation the following, viz., that there is a certain particular  $P$  which (a) is a part of  $M$ , and (b) stands to  $O$  in the relation of *being a prehension of*  $O$ ?" That this is the right analysis is a characteristic doctrine of McTaggart's, and it is absolutely essential to his general theory in Vol. II. He argues the question at length in §412.

Let us begin by stating for ourselves the alternative which McTaggart is envisaging and rejecting. The alternative is that there is a *direct* relation, which we will call the relation of "prehending", between the mind  $M$  as a unit and the object  $O$ . Even on McTaggart's view there is, of course, a relation of prehending between  $M$  as a unit and  $O$ . But it is not direct, like the relation of parent to child. It is the relational product of two more direct relations, like the relation of uncle to nephew or niece. The statement " $X$  is uncle of  $Z$ " is analysable into the statement " $X$  is a *brother of* someone who is a *parent of*  $Z$ "; and we express this fact by saying that the avuncular relation is the relational product of the relations of brotherhood and parenthood, taken in that order. Now, on McTaggart's view, the statement "The mind  $M$  is prehending the object  $O$ " is analysable into the statement " $M$  *contains* some part which is a *prehension of*  $O$ ". So, on this view, the relation of prehending is the relational product of the relations of containing a part and being a prehension of, taken in that order. On the alternative view there is no such relation as "being a prehension of"; for there is nothing of which it could be said that it is a prehension of which  $O$  is the object.

McTaggart brings forward a number of arguments in support of his view. It does not seem to me that they are very convincing, either severally or collectively. We will now consider them in turn.

(i) He claims that his theory agrees better with the results of his own introspection than the alternative theory does. He admits that this is not a strong argument, since many other people would say that the alternative theory seems to fit in better with the results of *their* introspection.

(ii) There is a characteristic observable difference between the experience of prehending many objects simultaneously and that of prehending fewer objects simultaneously. There is a similar difference, noticeable on retrospection, between the experience of prehending many objects successively in a given period and that of prehending fewer objects successively during an equal period. Now this difference seems to be appropriately expressed by saying that my mind is or has been "fuller" in the one case than in the other. The appropriateness of this expression is intelligible if the prehension of each different object is a different particular and is a part of the mind which prehends. But it is not intelligible if the difference consists merely in the fact that the mind, as a unit, stands in the relation of prehending to more objects on the former occasions and to fewer objects on the latter occasions.

I cannot attach much weight to this argument. An equally appropriate way of expressing the facts would be to say that the mind was more "variegated" on the one occasion than on the other. Now suppose it were the case that to every different relational property of the form "prehending the object *O*" there corresponded a different original quality in the self, such that acquiring the relational property at any moment causally determines acquiring the corresponding original quality simultaneously or immediately afterwards. Then a mind would be more variegated in quality when it was prehending more objects than when it was prehending fewer, even on the alternative which McTaggart rejects. Greater variegation *may*, no doubt, consist in being differentiated into more distinguishable parts; but it may equally consist in combining more distinguishable original qualities. And I should doubt whether introspection would enable one to decide which of these alternatives is fulfilled in the case which McTaggart has adduced.



(iii) When we contemplate our various experiences it seems that they, and possibly other experiences which we fail to notice, together make up the whole self. We may compare this with the fact that one's various visual sensa at any moment together make up one's whole visual field at that moment. Now it is quite clear that a mind could not be composed of the sum-total of all its various relational properties. Even if together they exhausted its *nature*, which they do not, they are none of them parts of *it*. If, on the other hand, my various experiences are particulars and are parts of my self, they may together make up my whole self.

This argument rests on McTaggart's invariable tacit identification of a continuant with that set of events which would commonly be called "the complete actual history of this continuant". Many people would agree that all my actual experiences, introspectible and non-introspectible, taken together completely make up my whole mental history. But they would refuse to identify any continuant with its actual history, and therefore they would refuse to identify my mind with my actual mental history. So far from admitting that my various experiences, taken together, *exhaust* my self, they would deny that my experiences are *parts of* my self. And surely it is plain that my experiences are *not* parts of my self in the simple and obvious sense in which they are parts of my mental history. If there is some other recondite sense in which they are also parts of my self, it should have been explained and defended.

I suppose that supporters of the alternative view to McTaggart's would deal with his argument somewhat as follows. They would say that, whenever a mind *M* stands in the relation of prehending to an object *O*, there is a *fact* of the form: "*M* is now standing in this relation to *O*." Corresponding to each different object that *M* prehends and to each different moment at which he prehends any object there is a different fact of this form. The conjunction of all these facts constitutes a single total fact, and this is the complete history of the mind *M*. McTaggart, they would say, has confused the *conjunction* of a number of such *facts about M* to



constitute a single *total fact* about *M* with the *composition* of a number of *parts of M* to make up *M itself*.

(iv) The next argument runs as follows. Suppose that a mind *M* does cognise an object *O* at a certain moment *t*, and that it does not cognise that object at a certain other moment *t'*. Then, on any view, there has been a change, and this change has involved both *M* and *O*. Now McTaggart thinks it obvious that, in such cases, the change in *M* is "more profound than" the correlative change in *O*.

He admits, of course, that such a change may eventually *determine causally* a much more radical change in *O* than it does in *M*. We may take his own excellent illustration. If a detective, who formerly did not know that Smith has committed a murder, eventually discovers that he did, this change will probably affect the future of Smith much more profoundly than it will affect that of the detective. Nevertheless, McTaggart holds, the acquirement of this knowledge about Smith is, *in itself*, a much more profound change in the detective than becoming known as a murderer by the detective is in Smith.

Now, on McTaggart's view, any change in the cognitive relation of a mind to an object involves a change in the *parts* of the mind. The cogniser acquires a part which he had not before, or ceases to have a part which he had before. Or, if we do not like this mode of speech, we can at any rate say that a part of the cognising mind, which was not marked off from other parts by being a cognition of a certain object, becomes marked off from the other parts by acquiring this relational property.

On McTaggart's view no such change is involved in the cognised object. The property of being cognised by *M* does not involve the presence in *O* of a certain part which will cease to exist, or cease to be qualitatively differentiated from the rest of *O*, when *O* ceases to be cognised by *M*. Thus the alleged asymmetry in the correlated changes of cognising subject and cognised object is readily explained on McTaggart's view that prehensions are parts of the prehending mind. On the rival view it is not so easy to explain. If the

cognitive relation is one that directly relates the mind  $M$ , as a unit, to the object  $O$ , it is not easy to see why beginning or ceasing to stand in this relation to  $O$  should be a more profound change in  $M$  than beginning or ceasing to stand in the converse of this relation to  $M$  is in  $O$ .

In order to estimate the value of this argument we must first try to understand in what sense getting to know  $O$  is a more important change in  $M$  than getting known by  $M$  is in  $O$ . It seems to me that the difference is causal. Any change in  $M$ 's cognition may, and perhaps always does, at once causally determine a further change in  $M$ . If it does nothing else, it almost certainly "leaves a trace", whatever a "trace" may be. It produces some kind of characteristic and more or less permanent structural modification in  $M$ , which will henceforth be a persistent cause-factor ready to co-operate with other cause-factors in determining  $M$ 's future experiences and actions. Now, so far as we know, the kind of change which we describe as "getting cognised by  $M$ " or "ceasing to be cognised by  $M$ " never *directly* determines any further change in  $O$ . It is never a total cause which immediately determines a further change in  $O$ . Nor is it even a cause-factor which, in conjunction with other cause-factors already present in  $O$ , constitutes a total cause which immediately determines a further change in  $O$ . In so far as it has any effect on  $O$  this is only because the changes set up in  $M$  through  $O$ 's becoming known to him determine processes which eventually affect  $O$ .

This seems to be a fair account of the facts. Is McTaggart's theory that prehensions are parts of the prehending mind either necessary or sufficient to explain them? (a) The fact might very well be ultimate. This, as we shall see, is McTaggart's view about the fact that we take more interest, *caeteris paribus*, in the future than in the past. After all, on any view, the relation of prehending or cognising is non-symmetrical. So it is not particularly paradoxical that becoming cognisant of  $O$  should affect  $M$  otherwise than becoming cognised by  $M$  affects  $O$ . So McTaggart's theory is not necessary to explain the facts.

(b) Suppose that McTaggart's theory were true. It is not in the least self-evident that acquiring a new part or losing an old part must immediately determine a further change in any whole which undergoes this change. Nor, to take another interpretation of McTaggart's theory, is it self-evident that having a part which becomes marked out from the rest by a certain characteristic at a certain moment must immediately determine further changes in any whole to which such a part belongs. On the other hand, it is not self-evident that a mere change in the relational properties of a continuant, which did not involve any change in its parts, might *not* immediately determine other changes in that continuant. So far as one knows, this is exactly what happens when a billiard-ball, which has previously been moving uniformly in a straight line, makes contact with another ball or with a cushion. And it would be fair to say that this transaction affects the subsequent history of the ball "much more profoundly" than it affects the subsequent history of the cushion. So McTaggart's theory is not sufficient to explain the facts. And, since it is neither necessary nor sufficient to explain them, it cannot derive much support from them.

(v) McTaggart's last argument on this point is directed against persons who admit that pleasures and pains are parts of the mind which feels them, but deny that cognitions are parts of the mind which cognises.

(a) McTaggart remarks, in the first place, that such persons cannot consistently object to his doctrine on the ground that minds or selves have *no* parts. Now he is inclined to think that many people have adopted the rival view to his about cognitions because they have held that selves have *no* parts. And he thinks that they have refused to admit that selves have parts because they considered that the very high degree and peculiar kind of unity which is characteristic of a mind is incompatible with its being a whole composed of parts. On this I have two comments to make.

(α) McTaggart assumes that those who call pleasures and pains "states" of the mind which feels them would admit his doctrine that to be a state of a continuant entails being a

part of it. I am sure that most people would not admit this. And those who do not *could* consistently combine the view that pleasures and pains are states of the mind which feels them with the view that minds have no parts.

( $\beta$ ) I am inclined to think that people have objected to regarding minds as complex wholes because they have thought that this would commit them to "mental atomism". By this I mean the theory that minds are wholes which are existentially less fundamental than their parts. On this view a mind is composed of a set of interrelated parts, each of which *might* have existed without the rest having existed and *might not* have stood in the relations in which it does in fact stand to the rest even if they had existed. The parts are thus like bricks, and a mind is like a house built with these bricks.

Now one is not really committed to this by holding that a mind is composed of certain parts interrelated in a certain characteristic way. For it is quite possible to hold that none of these parts could have existed unless all the rest had done so, and that none of them could have existed without standing in that peculiar kind of relation to each other which makes the whole a mind of which each of them is a state. I think that we have a plain instance of this state of affairs in a visual sense-field. Quite clearly this is a whole, of which various visual *sensa* are parts. And yet it seems most unlikely that any *sensum* which is in fact part of a certain visual sense-field could have existed except as a part of that sense-field.

(*b*) The second point which McTaggart makes in reference to pleasures and pains is the following. Many cognitions are closely bound up with pleasures and pains. E.g., we often say of a certain memory that it is painful, or of a certain anticipation that it is pleasant. If we accept the view under discussion, such statements must mean that, when a mind enters into a certain cognitive relation with a certain object, the acquirement of this new relational property causes the occurrence of a pleasant or a painful state in the mind. It cannot be literally true that the *memory* is painful or that the *anticipation* is pleasant. For, on the theory which denies that cognitions are parts of the self which cognises, there is no particular which



could be called "this memory" or "that anticipation". There are just the *facts* that this mind stands at a certain moment in the relation of remembering to one object and that it stands at the same or at another moment in the relation of anticipating to another object. And facts cannot literally be pleasant or painful. Now McTaggart thinks he can show that what we call a "painful memory" or a "pleasant anticipation" is not simply a memory which *causes* a painful feeling or an anticipation which *causes* a pleasant feeling. It must be a memory *qualified by* painfulness or an anticipation *qualified by* pleasantness. This he professes to prove in Chap. xli. We shall be dealing with this question in Chap. xxix of this work, and so I will say no more about it at present.

I will now sum up on this question as a whole. I do not think that McTaggart has produced any conclusive evidence in favour of his own analysis of situations which we describe by such a phrase as "The mind *M* is cognising the object *O*." Nevertheless, his analysis, or something like it, may be right. The question cannot be settled until we have discussed the nature of Selves and Ostensible Self-knowledge, which we shall do in Chap. xxx of this work. Plainly McTaggart's analysis is one which naturally accompanies the theory that a mind is a whole composed of experiences interrelated in a certain characteristic way. The alternative analysis naturally accompanies the theory that a mind is, or contains as an essential constituent, a kind of simple Pure Ego. If the former theory of the self should appear to be more satisfactory than the latter, this would support something like McTaggart's analysis of cognitive situations as against the alternative analysis.

There is one other remark to be made at this stage in fairness to McTaggart. I have frequently had occasion to blame him for tacitly identifying what would commonly be called a "continuant" with that set of occurrents which would commonly be called "the complete history of that continuant", and for talking as if parts of the history of a thing were parts of the thing. I think that this criticism is



fully justified whenever he is using arguments which claim to be independent of his destructive and his constructive theory of temporal appearance. But, if we look forward and bring this part of his system into account, we shall have to modify our criticisms. The notions of "continuant", "occurrents", "history of a continuant", and so on, are essentially temporal; and, if McTaggart is right in the destructive part of his theory, temporal characteristics are delusive. Therefore, strictly speaking, there are neither continuants nor occurrents, and nothing has a history. On the other hand, as we shall see when we consider the constructive theory of temporal appearance, McTaggart held that the real non-temporal terms which we misprehend as successive total events in the history of a thing really are parts of that thing in a certain dimension. This is one of the points, about which I warned the reader in the Introduction, where knowledge of what comes later in the book is needed in order to be fair to what comes earlier.

1.3. *Can a Prehension of a Part be part of a Prehension of a Whole?* If a mind  $M$  prehends an object  $O$  and also prehends an object  $o$  which is in fact a part of  $O$ , can  $M$ 's prehension of  $o$  be a part of his prehension of  $O$ ? McTaggart says that this *can be* so, since we can give examples in which it plainly *is* so.

According to McTaggart this situation occurs when and only when  $M$  prehends  $O$  *as* containing  $o$  and prehends  $o$  *as* contained in  $O$ . It is quite possible toprehend a whole  $O$ , which in fact contains a part  $o$ , without prehending  $o$  at all. Indeed McTaggart goes so far as to say that it is possible toprehend a whole without prehending *any* of its parts. Again, it may be possible toprehend *both* a whole  $O$  and a part  $o$  of that whole without prehending  $O$  as containing  $o$  or prehending  $o$  as contained in  $O$ . In none of these cases would  $M$ 's prehension of  $O$  contain a part which is his prehension of  $o$ . But there are cases in which  $M$  prehends both  $O$  and  $o$ , and prehends  $o$  as a part of  $O$ . In such cases his prehension of  $o$  *is* a part of his prehension of  $O$ .

Suppose, e.g., that I sense a visual sensum which in fact consists of a square colour-expanse composed of a red circular

central patch and a blue border. In many cases I make the judgment: "This is a square whole composed of a red circle surrounded by a blue border." What can this inspective judgment be based upon except my prehension of the square whole and of the circular part, and my prehension of the latter *as* a part of the former? It must be admitted then that we often doprehend two particulars  $O$  and  $o$ , and prehend  $o$  as a part of  $O$ . Two questions remain. (i) In such cases is my prehension of  $o$  a part of my prehension of  $O$ ? And (ii) is it *only* in such cases that my prehension of what is in fact a part of  $O$  is a part of my prehension of  $O$ ?

(i) McTaggart admits that it is conceivable that, in such cases,  $P(O)$ , my prehension of  $O$ , and  $P(o)$ , my prehension of  $o$ , may have no part in common. It is conceivable that there might be another prehension, which we will denote by  $P(O, o)$ , founded in some way on  $P(O)$  and  $P(o)$ , which is a prehension of  $o$  as a part of  $O$ . But he finds it evident on introspection that, in many such cases,  $P(o)$  is a part of  $P(O)$ . To this I can only answer that it is not evident to me from introspection even that there are particulars which can be described by the phrases "my prehension of  $O$ " and "my prehension of  $o$ ". Therefore *a fortiori* I cannot rely on introspection to tell me that, in such cases, my prehension of  $o$  is a part of my prehension of  $O$ .

McTaggart tries to reinforce his contention in the following way. He asks us to consider cases where "we gradually perceive the parts of a datum of which we only perceived the whole before—as when, with a gradual increase in light, more details appear in the pattern of a carpet" (§413). He says that we shall find, in such cases, that the change consists in an increase in the internal complexity of a prehension which was before relatively simple. It does not consist in the addition of prehensions of parts to a persistent and internally unchanged prehension of the whole.

Unfortunately this example is not really relevant for McTaggart's purpose. He does not believe that we "perceive", in his sense of the word, i.e., that we *prehend*, anything that could be called "the carpet". We *prehend* only visual

sensibilia; we *infer*, according to McTaggart, that they are appearances of a carpet. Suppose now that the change takes place which we call "a gradual increase of light". McTaggart assumes that I continue to sense one and the same highly differentiated sensible throughout the period, and that I gradually come to prehend more and more details, which were in fact in it, though not prehendended by me, from the beginning. This seems to me to be a most unpalausible view for anyone to take who holds McTaggart's opinion of what is commonly called "perceiving material objects".

A much more palausible account of the admitted facts, on McTaggart's principles, would be that I sense one and the same sensible throughout the period, and that this starts by being relatively undifferentiated and gradually becomes highly differentiated. If difficulties are raised, as they well might be, as to what constitutes "one and the same sensible", we could substitute the following alternative, which would still be more palausible on McTaggart's principles than his own account of the facts. We could hold that I sense successively a continuous series of successive total sensibilia, so inter-related as to form a single "sense-object". Each of these sensibilia is taken by me as an appearance of the same part of the surface of the carpet, and each successive member of the series is more highly differentiated than any of its predecessors. On either of these alternatives what primarily happens is an increase in the internal complexity of the *prehensum*. This may, or may not, involve a parallel increase in the internal complexity of my prehensions. But, even if it did not, I might still think that I was having a single prehension which was getting internally more differentiated. For I might be led to this belief through confusion with the undoubted fact that the sensible, on the first alternative, or the sense-object, on the second, *is* doing so. I am therefore not inclined to attach much weight to this contention of McTaggart's.

(ii) McTaggart's argument to show that it is *only* when I prehend  $o$  as a part of  $O$  that my prehension  $P(o)$  is a part of my prehension  $P(O)$  is as follows. No one, he says, would

suggest that my prehension of  $o'$ , a particular which is not in fact a part of  $O$ , could be part of my prehension of  $O$ . Now, if I prehend  $o$  but do not prehend it as a part of  $O$ , my prehension  $P(o)$  stands in no nearer relation to  $P(O)$  than does my prehension  $P(o')$ .

It seems to me that the situation is not nearly so simple as this argument would suggest. McTaggart seems to have forgotten for the moment that there may be misprehension, on his view. If there is misprehension, I may misprehend  $o$  as *not* being a part of  $O$ , though in fact it is a part of  $O$ . And I may misprehend  $o'$  as *being* a part of  $O$ , though in fact it is not. It is certain that McTaggart admits the first kind of misprehension. For, as we shall see when we deal with his positive theory of temporal appearance, he holds that, of two real terms which we misprehend as successive total events in the history of a mind, the one which we prehend as earlier is a *part of* the one which we prehend as later. Yet we prehend the former as *wholly outside of* the latter. If this kind of misprehension exists, it is reasonable to suppose that the opposite kind is also possible. Let us now restate the position in terms of these possibilities.

Suppose I prehend three particulars  $O$ ,  $o$ , and  $o'$ , of which  $o$  is and  $o'$  is not a part of  $O$ . Then, as regards the relation of  $o$  and  $O$ , there are three possibilities. ( $\alpha$ ) It may be that  $o$  is correctly prehend as a part of  $O$ ; ( $\beta$ ) it may be that  $o$  is misprehended as not being a part of  $O$ ; or ( $\gamma$ ) it may be that  $o$  is prehend neither as a part of  $O$  nor as not being a part of  $O$ . As regards the relations of  $o'$  to  $O$  there are also three possibilities. ( $\alpha$ ) It may be that  $o'$  is correctly prehend as not being a part of  $O$ ; ( $\beta$ ) it may be that  $o'$  is misprehended as a part of  $O$ ; or ( $\gamma$ ) it may be that  $o'$  is prehend neither as a part of  $O$  nor as not being a part of  $O$ .

Now I think it would be fair to say that, if ever one prehension is part of another, this is most likely to be so in case ( $\alpha$ ); i.e., where one prehensum *is*, and is *prehended as*, part of another. And I think it would be fair to say that, if ever one prehension is not part of another simultaneous prehension in the same mind, this is most likely to be so in case



$(b, \alpha)$ ; i.e., where one prehensum *is not*, and is *prehended as not being*, part of the other. As regards cases  $(a, \beta)$  and  $(b, \beta)$  it is hard to know what to say. But, perhaps, the following argument might be used about  $(a, \beta)$ . Since  $o$  is in fact a part of  $O$ , it seems unlikely that it would be misprehended as not being a part of  $O$  if  $P(o)$  were part of  $P(O)$ . So there is a presumption that  $P(o)$  is *not* a part of  $P(O)$  in this case. By a similar argument we might conclude that there is a presumption that  $P(o')$  is a part of  $P(O)$  in case  $(b, \beta)$ . It is still more difficult to make any conjectures about cases  $(a, \gamma)$  and  $(b, \gamma)$ . Perhaps it is rather more likely that  $P(o)$  is a part of  $P(O)$  than that it is altogether outside the latter in case  $(a, \gamma)$ . And perhaps it is rather more likely that  $P(o')$  is altogether outside  $P(O)$  than that it is a part of the latter in case  $(b, \gamma)$ .

To sum up. I should say that the strongest evidence that we can get for holding that one prehension *is* part of another is in case  $(a, \alpha)$ , and that there is a fairly strong presumption in case  $(b, \beta)$ . The strongest evidence that we can get for holding that one prehension *is not* part of another is in case  $(b, \alpha)$ , and there is a fairly strong presumption in case  $(a, \beta)$ . Cases  $(a, \gamma)$  and  $(b, \gamma)$  give too slight a presumption in either direction to be worth serious consideration. This is, of course, a very different conclusion from McTaggart's. He would say that a prehension *is certainly* part of another in case  $(a, \alpha)$ , and that it is certainly not a part of another in any of the remaining cases. Probably he did not contemplate case  $(b, \beta)$ , i.e., where  $o'$ , which in fact is not a part of  $O$ , is misprehended as being part of  $O$ . If this alternative be excluded, the following difference would still remain. McTaggart is sure that  $P(o)$  would not be a part of  $P(O)$  in case  $(a, \gamma)$ , i.e., where, although  $o$  is in fact part of  $O$ , it is neither prehended as a part nor prehended as not a part of  $O$ . I, on the other hand, can see nothing in this case to enable me to reach even a reasonably probable decision on this question.

1.31. *Could one prehend a Whole without prehending any Part of it?* There is one other point in this section of McTaggart's theory which seems to need some discussion, although it is



not essential to the development of his argument. In §413 he asserts that it is possible toprehend what is in fact a whole without prehend<sup>ing</sup> *any* of its parts. This seems, *prima facie*, a rather startling doctrine. Many philosophers seem to have tacitly assumed the contrary opposite, viz., that it is impossible to prehend a whole without *ipso facto* prehend<sup>ing</sup> *all* its parts. This dogma has been the basis of arguments to show that there are prehensions in a mind which that mind cannot introspectively prehend. Such arguments always take the following line. *M* prehend<sup>s</sup> an object *O*. There is reason to believe that *O* is a whole in which *X*, *Y*, and *Z* are parts. Therefore *M* must prehend *X* and prehend *Y* and prehend *Z*. But, when *M* introspects, he finds that he cannot detect his prehension of *X* or his prehension of *Y* or his prehension of *Z*. Therefore *M* must have prehensions which he cannot introspectively prehend. Such arguments are generally weak in every part; but it is worth while to notice that, even if they were otherwise flawless, they could not lead to the desired conclusion without assuming a premise which is the contrary opposite of McTaggart's assertion in §413.

It is plain that the question is an important one, and I propose to discuss it in some detail. Evidently the two following alternatives are logically possible beside the two contrary opposites already mentioned. (i) That I must prehend *some* parts of any whole that I prehend, but that I need not prehend *all* its parts or even all the members of any set of parts of it. (ii) That I must prehend *all* the members of *some* set of parts of any whole which I prehend, but that I need not prehend all the parts of the whole. What are we to say about these alternatives?

The first remark that I would make is this. If we consider a whole which has parts within parts without end, there is not much to choose between the extreme view that I cannot prehend it without prehend<sup>ing</sup> *all* its parts and the very mild view that I cannot prehend it without prehend<sup>ing</sup> *some* of its parts. For suppose that the latter were the true doctrine. Then I cannot prehend *O* without prehend<sup>ing</sup> at least one part of  $P_1$  of it. But  $P_1$  will itself be a complex whole. There-

fore I cannotprehend  $P_1$  without prehending at least one part of  $P_{11}$  of it.  $P_{11}$  in its turn will be a complex whole, and so I cannotprehend it without prehending at least one part  $P_{111}$  of it. And so on without end. So the doctrine that I cannotprehend a whole without prehending *at least one* part of it entails, in the case of any whole which is endlessly divisible, that I cannotprehend such a whole without also having an endless series of prehensions of parts within parts without end. Now this is the kind of consequence which one would be inclined to use as an objection against the extreme view that I cannotprehend a whole without prehending *all* its parts. We now see that, if this be a valid objection at all, it applies, in the case of wholes which are endlessly divisible, to *every* alternative except McTaggart's doctrine that I canprehend a whole without prehending *any* of its parts. Now McTaggart holds that *every* particular is a whole which has parts within parts without end, and that everything that can be prehended is a particular. And most people hold that *some* particulars which weprehend, e.g., visual sensibilia, have parts within parts without end. To anyone who held this view McTaggart could legitimately put the following dilemma: "Either you must admit that you canprehend some wholes without prehending any of their parts; or you must admit that, whenever you sense a visual sensible, you *ipso facto* have an endless series of prehensions of parts within parts of this sensible."

Faced with this dilemma, an opponent of McTaggart's might take one of the two following alternatives: (a) He might deny that visual sensibilia, or anything else that weprehend, have parts within parts without end. He might hold that every visual sensible either is an intrinsically indivisible *minimum sensible* or is a whole composed of a finite number of *minima sensibilia*. Here the argument would stop, since it is self-evident to McTaggart that every particular has parts within parts without end. (b) The opponent might admit the endless divisibility of visual sensibilia; and he might admit that, whenever he senses a visual sensible, he *ipso facto* has an endless series of prehensions of parts within parts of that

sensible. But he might then try to mitigate the appearance of paradox as follows.

He might remind McTaggart that one must distinguish between prehending a particular *o* which is *in fact* a part of *O*, and prehending *o as* a part of *O*. He might say: "I admit that I can prehend *O* without prehending anything *as* a part of *O*, but I deny that I can prehend *O* without prehending something which is *in fact* a part of *O*. No doubt this entails that I have an endless series of prehensions of parts within parts of *O* whenever I prehend *O*, but none of these need be prehensions of these particulars *as* parts of *O*. And I feel no objection to the existence in me of this endless series of prehensions whenever I sense a visual sensible, provided that the distinction between prehending something which is *in fact* a part and prehending it *as* a part is clearly understood and firmly grasped."

To this McTaggart might answer: "Granted that you need not prehend each or any of the prehended parts *as parts*, you must prehend each of them as having *some* empirical characteristic. You cannot prehend a particular and not prehend it as characterised in any way whatever. Now can you really maintain that, whenever you sense a visual sensible, you *ipso facto* prehend an endless series of parts within parts, and prehend each of them *as* characterised in a certain way though not *as* parts of the sensible? Yet you are committed to this if you *admit* that visual sensibilia are endlessly divisible and *deny* my doctrine that one can prehend a whole without prehending any of its parts."

At this stage the opponent would have at least two alternative moves. ( $\alpha$ ) He might say that he does not see why there should not be two kinds of acquaintance with particulars, viz., *mere* acquaintance, and prehension in the sense defined by us. The latter consists in being acquainted with a particular as characterised in a certain way; the former would consist in simply being acquainted with a particular. It might be suggested that the latter cannot occur without the former, but that the former can occur without the latter. Most of the states of acquaintance in the endless series might

be states of *pure* acquaintance and not prehensions in our sense. ( $\beta$ ) The opponent might agree with McTaggart in refusing to draw any such distinction or to recognise any other form of acquaintance with particulars except prehension of them as so-and-so. But he might say that the prehensum of each prehension in such an endless series is prehended as having a different determinate quality of *sensible position*.

It seems to me then that we are not forced to accept McTaggart's contention—that one canprehend a whole without prehending any of its parts—by the impossibility of avoiding absurdities if we reject it. But what are we to say about the principle itself?

I am going to propose for consideration the following principle in opposition to McTaggart's. Let *O* be any particular which is in fact a whole composed of parts. If I am to be acquainted with *O* as a whole two conditions must be fulfilled. (*a*) I must be acquainted with some parts of *O*; and (*b*) there must be no part of *O* which contains all the parts of *O* with which I am acquainted. I think it is clear that the second condition is necessary *if* the first is. Suppose a person holds that I cannot be acquainted with *O* as a whole unless I am acquainted with *some* of its parts. Then surely he would not be satisfied if all the parts of *O* with which I am acquainted fall into a certain part *P* of *O*, so that I am acquainted with no part of *O* which falls outside of *P*. The second condition ensures that the parts of *O* with which I am acquainted shall be, as we say, "dispersed all over it". My own position is the following. I am not certain that condition (*a*) must be fulfilled; but I am quite sure that, *if* condition (*a*) is necessary, *then* condition (*b*) is necessary too.

## 2. McTaggart's "Indirect Perception".

As we have said, McTaggart uses the name "perception" for what we have called "prehension". In Chap. xxxix, § 439, of *The Nature of Existence*, McTaggart introduces an important form of cognition which he calls "Indirect Perception". It seems desirable to explain it at this point, and to consider how it is related to prehension.



Indirect perception presupposes that a mind can prehend particulars which are themselves prehensions. And it is of no great interest unless one mind can prehend particulars which are states of another mind. Suppose that  $P_{BO}$  is a prehension in the mind  $B$  of the object  $O$ . Suppose further that  $P_{BO}$  is itself prehendend by some mind  $M$ . Lastly, let us suppose that  $M$  prehends  $P_{BO}$  *as* a prehension of the object  $O$ . Then  $M$ 's prehension of  $P_{BO}$  would be called a "first-grade indirect perception" in  $M$  of  $O$ .

To have a first-grade indirect perception of  $O$  is to prehend a prehension whose object is  $O$ , and to prehend it *as* a prehension of that object. It is easy to see that there might be indirect perception of the second or higher grades, if there can be indirect perception of the first grade. To have a second-grade indirect perception of  $O$  is to prehend a prehension which is a first-grade indirect perception of  $O$ , and to prehend it *as* a first-grade indirect perception of  $O$ . And so on for indirect perceptions of the third and higher grades.

Let us confine our attention henceforth to first-grade indirect perceptions, for the sake of simplicity. Evidently two different cases are possible, if we admit that one mind may have telepathic prehension of the cognitive states of another mind. (i) The mind  $M$  which prehends  $P_{BO}$  may just be  $B$  itself. In that case McTaggart would say that  $B$  perceives  $O$  *both* directly and indirectly. This possibility is realised if a person introspects his own sensing of a sensum. He then "directly perceives", i.e., prehends, the sensum in sensing it; and he also indirectly perceives it in prehending his own prehension of it *as* such. (ii) If we admit the possibility of telepathic prehension,  $B$ 's prehension  $P_{BO}$  may be prehendend by another mind  $A$ . If  $A$  prehends it *as* a prehension of  $O$ , he will be having a first-grade indirect perception of  $O$ . If  $A$  does not prehend  $O$ , i.e., if there is no state of  $A$  which could be symbolised by  $P_{AO}$ , McTaggart would say that  $A$  has no "direct perception" of  $O$ , and that  $A$  has *only* "indirect perception" of  $O$ . He holds that this situation is possible. On the other hand, of course,  $A$  might both prehend  $O$  and prehend  $P_{BO}$  as a prehension of  $O$ . In that case he



would be said to have *both* "direct" and "indirect" perception of *O*.

I shall keep McTaggart's phrase "indirect perception", and shall not use the phrase "indirect prehension". So "prehension", as used by me, will always be equivalent to McTaggart's "direct perception". Every indirect perception *is* indeed a prehension, but it is *not* a prehension of the object of which it is an indirect perception. It is a prehension of a prehension of that object, if it is of the first grade. It would be misleading to talk as if there were two species of prehension, one direct and the other indirect.

McTaggart does indeed offer a reason for counting indirect perception as a species of perception, in his sense, and therefore as a species of prehension in ours. But the argument which he gives seems to me to suggest a very different conclusion. The argument may be put as follows. If *A* prehends  $P_{BO}$  as a prehension of *O*, he prehends  $P_{BO}$  as standing to *O* in the relation of prehension to prehensum. Now it is impossible for a person to *prehend* one particular as standing in a certain relation to a certain other particular unless he is, in some sense, acquainted with *both* the interrelated particulars. Now we do not say that *A* has an indirect perception of *O* unless he prehends  $P_{BO}$  as a prehension of *O*. And we have just seen that, in order to be able to do this, *A* must in some sense be acquainted with, i.e., *prehend*, *O*. Thus, McTaggart claims, indirect perception of *O*, as defined by him, *is* a species of prehension of *O*.

I should draw a very different conclusion from McTaggart's premises. I should say that, if we accept his premises, we ought to conclude that *A* cannot have indirect perception of *O* unless he *also* has "direct perception", i.e., prehension, of *O*. How can *A* *prehend*  $P_{BO}$  as standing in a certain relation to *O*, unless he *prehends* *O* in exactly the same primary sense in which he prehends  $P_{BO}$ ? I should have thought that you either *prehend* a particular or you do not, and that there could be no question of *prehending* it more or less "directly".

The upshot of this discussion is as follows. (i) I have no objection to admitting the possibility of "indirect percep-

tion", in the sense in which McTaggart has defined it. But (ii) I cannot regard it as a species of prehension. (iii) I do not think it possible to have indirect perception of an object unless one also prehends that object, i.e., unless one also has "direct perception" of it in McTaggart's sense. (iv) If this be so, indirect perception is much less important than McTaggart makes out. For, on his view, we might indirectly perceive a great many things which we do notprehend. (v) I do not deny that each of us mayprehend a great many particulars which are *in fact* prehensions of objects which we *do not*prehend. What I deny is that we canprehend any of these particulars *as* prehensions of the objects of which they are *in fact* prehensions. And, unless we can do this, our prehensions of these particulars will not be indirect perceptions of these objects.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### CERTAIN KINDS OF OSTENSIBLE COGITATION: (II) OSTENSIBLE SENSE-PERCEPTION

Ostensible Sense-perception is a generic term which covers ostensible seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling, etc. These terms are, however, ambiguous in various ways; and, before explaining McTaggart's views on ostensible sense-perception, I propose to clear up the ambiguities, to draw the necessary distinctions, and to formulate the problem in my own way.

#### 1. Independent Account of Ostensible Sense-perception.

I think that the first point to be made is that there are several forms of ostensible sense-perception which are, *prima facie*, fundamentally different in nature. Philosophers have too often confined their attention to a certain one of them, viz., visual perception, in discussing the subject.

1.1. *Various Kinds of Sense-perception.* I begin by dividing ostensible sense-perception into "extra-somatic" and "intra-somatic". In the former the percipient seems to himself to be perceiving foreign bodies or events; in the latter he seems to himself to be perceiving the inside of his own body and processes going on in it. Now there are at least three important forms of extra-somatic sense-perception, viz., hearing, sight, and touch, which seem, *prima facie*, to be unlike each other in certain fundamental respects.

Sight and hearing agree with each other and differ from touch in that they seem to reveal to us things and events which are located at various distances out from our bodies. But hearing differs from sight in the following important way. When I say that I am hearing *the Trinity clock*, I should admit that this is an elliptical expression for something which

could be more accurately expressed by some such phrase as "I am hearing the Trinity clock *striking*". Strictly speaking, I am hearing a *noise* of a rhythmic booming kind, which seems to be emanating from a distant place and coming to me in a certain direction. I take it that this place contains the Trinity clock, and that a certain rhythmic process in this is causing it to emit the noise. In general, I think that common sense would accept the following analysis of such sentences as "I am hearing the so-and-so", where "the so-and-so" is a phrase which describes a material object, such as a certain bell, if it describes anything. Such sentences are admittedly equivalent to: "I am hearing a *noise* of a certain kind, and I take it to be *emanating from* the so-and-so." On this point there would be no difference in principle between the account which an unscientific percipient would give of the experience as it seems to him and the account which a scientist would give of it from the standpoint of physics.

But, when I say that I am *seeing* the Trinity clock, I do not readily admit that I am using an elliptical expression. I seem to myself to be prehending a remote coloured area which I take to be part of the surface of a certain independent foreign body. I may learn from the scientists that the situation, in its physical aspect, is very much like that which exists when I am hearing the clock. I may learn that certain rhythmic processes are going on in the place where the clock is, that these cause a disturbance to be emitted in all directions from this centre, and that this disturbance eventually reaches my body and produces a visual sensation in my mind. But, even if I accept all this as proved, it remains a fact that the situation does not present itself to me in that way when I am having the experience. I continue to seem to myself to be prehending the surface of a remote independent foreign body and to be actively exploring it with my eyes. In this respect visual perception resembles tactual perception, except that the objects are perceived as remote from the percipient's body in the one case and as in contact with it in the other.

There is, of course, a much closer analogy between the auditory experience called "hearing a *noise*" and the visual

experience called "seeing a *flash*" than there is between "hearing a *bell*" and "seeing a *bell*". Suppose I were looking from a vessel at sea towards the coast on a dark night and that I saw a rhythmically recurrent series of flashes in a certain direction. This would be very much like the experience of hearing the Trinity clock striking. If I were to make the judgment: "That is the so-and-so lighthouse", the analysis of this judgment would be very similar to that of the judgment: "That is the Trinity clock", which I might make on the occasion of hearing a certain rhythmic series of booming noises. Yet there are two very important differences to be noted. (a) The flashes would seem to be *happening at* a certain remote place, whilst the noises would seem to be *coming from* such a place. (b) In the supposed circumstances I should *not* say that I am *seeing* the so-and-so lighthouse. I should say this only if it were daytime and I were aware of a certain remote coloured area which I took to be part of the surface of the lighthouse. In the sense in which I can *see* a material object when I look at it in daylight I cannot *hear* any material object. In the only sense in which I can hear a material object I may also "see" one; but it would be felt to be inappropriate to say that I "see" it, if I "see" it only in the sense in which I might hear it.

Let us now consider tactual perception. Here we must distinguish three factors. (i) Awareness of various sensible qualities, such as hotness and coldness, roughness and smoothness, etc. This may be compared with awareness of auditory qualities in hearing and of colours in seeing. (ii) Awareness of shape and extent. This may be compared with the corresponding factor in visual perception. There is, I think, nothing much like it in hearing. (iii) The experience of actively pulling and pushing foreign bodies which are in contact with one's own and making them move in spite of their varying degrees of resistance to one's efforts; the experience of trying to move them and failing because the resistance which they offer is too great; and the experience of being forced to move, in spite of resisting to one's utmost, by the thrust and pressure of other bodies on one's own. I will call this "dynamic



experience". I know of nothing analogous to it in any other form of sense-perception. In tactual perception we seem to ourselves to be prehending the surfaces of independent material things close to our own bodies, and to be exploring the latter and interacting with them.

We may sum up the likenesses and unlikenesses which we have so far noted between hearing, seeing, and touching as follows. (i) In the case of auditory and visual perception we talk *both* of hearing and seeing *physical events* (noises and flashes, respectively) *and* of hearing and seeing *material things* (bells, clocks, etc.). In the case of tactual perception we talk *only* of touching *material things*. (ii) In both auditory and visual perception of physical events we seem to ourselves to be prehending the events. In both visual and tactual perception of material things we seem to ourselves to be prehending parts of the surfaces of the latter. In auditory perception of material things we do not seem to ourselves to be prehending *them*; we seem only to be prehending *noises* which we take to be emitted by them. In tactual perception, and in it only, we seem to ourselves to be interacting with material things. I shall express these facts as follows. I shall say that sight and hearing are, in their epistemological aspect, "ostensibly prehensive of physical events". I shall say that sight and touch are, in their epistemological aspect, "ostensibly prehensive of material things". And I shall say that hearing is, in its epistemological aspect, "ostensibly projective with respect to material things". On the other hand, I shall say that sight and hearing, in their physical aspect, are both of them "emanative"; for the experience in each case is initiated by the stimulation of the percipient's body by a disturbance which has emanated from a distant source. Lastly, I shall say that touch, in its physical aspect, is "non-emanative".

In a complete discussion it would be necessary at this stage to consider the distinction between seeing things which are self-luminous and seeing things by diffused light from sources other than themselves. And it would be necessary to consider whether there are any analogies to this distinction in the case

of auditory perception. But I do not propose to pursue this further, since it is hardly necessary for our present restricted aim.

It remains to consider intra-somatic perception, i.e., the perception which each of us has of his own body, and of no other body, by means of organic sensations. Each of us is almost always aware of a general somatic background or field, which is vaguely extended and is fairly homogeneous in quality throughout its extent. It is fairly constant in general character, though its determinate tone varies from time to time. Such variations are recorded by expressions like: "I am feeling tired", "I am feeling well", "I am feeling sick", and so on. No doubt the general character changes very slowly as we grow older, and it may undergo profound and fairly sudden modifications in illness or at certain periods of normal life, such as puberty. Against this fairly homogeneous and constant background there happen from time to time outstanding localised feelings which are independent of one's previous volitions, e.g., a sudden twinge of toothache, a prolonged and voluminous stomach-ache, and so on.

We might compare the general somatic field to the visual field of which one would be aware if one lay on one's back and looked up at the sky when there is not much movement among the clouds. And we might compare the occasional localised outstanding toothaches, stomach-aches, etc., to the visual experiences which we should have if there were occasional flashes of lightning, dark masses of cloud, and so on, in the sky.

Lastly, we must notice that, whenever we act upon or react against a foreign body, there are characteristic localised changes in the somatic field, connected with the pressures, tensions, and movements of our muscles, tendons, and joints.

Let us now compare and contrast intra-somatic perception with the three forms of extra-somatic perception which we have already considered. The following points are of interest.

(i) All forms of normal extra-somatic perception share with normal intra-somatic perception the following characteristic. They are all "transmissive" in their physiological aspect;

i.e., they all depend on the existence and functioning of nerves which connect the other parts of the body to the brain and convey disturbances at a finite rate inwards or outwards. Unless these nerves and the brain are intact no perception, whether extra-somatic or intra-somatic, will arise even though the external or internal sense-organs be appropriately stimulated.

(ii) One's awareness of one's somatic field as extended, and one's awareness of this or that outstanding bodily feeling as happening in this or that part of it, are, I think, psychologically primitive experiences. But the identification of this extended somatic field with the region occupied by one's body as a visible and tangible object, and the correlation of each part of the former with a certain part of the latter, are, I am sure, products of early experience and association.

(iii) The following points of likeness and unlikeness between visual perception and intra-somatic perception are worth noticing. So long as it is light and one's eyes are open, one seems to oneself to be prehending an extended, spatially continuous, variously coloured and shaded field, which is presented as a finite but unbounded whole. We uncritically identify this field and its differentiations with something public and neutral, viz., the ground, the sky, the surfaces of trees, houses, and so on. We may sum up these facts about visual perception by saying that it is "ostensibly synoptic" and "ostensibly macrocosmic". Now intra-somatic perception may be described as "ostensibly synoptic" and "ostensibly microcosmic". It is synoptic because the somatic field is presented as a whole, and the outstanding bodily feelings are presented as differentiations of this whole. It is microcosmic because, in being aware of it, one does not seem to oneself to be prehending a public neutral world of independent external objects. On the contrary, one seems to oneself to be prehending in a uniquely intimate way a certain particular object which is uniquely associated with oneself.

(iv) Touch, in contrast with sight and intra-somatic perception, gives us information piecemeal about foreign bodies and the surfaces of our own bodies. And, as we have seen, it

makes us aware of bodies as dynamically interacting substances. Thus sight, touch, and intra-somatic perception severally supply their own characteristic contributions to our knowledge of our own bodies and of foreign bodies. It is only through their co-existence and their constant intimate co-operation that we acquire the general world-schema which is the common background of daily life and of natural science.

1.2. *Perception of Physical Events.* We will now consider in more detail the experience of perceiving a physical event. I shall take the experience which would be recorded by such a phrase as "I am hearing a squeaky noise" as a typical example. What is said about it can be applied, without much change, to the experience which would be recorded by such a phrase as "I am seeing a red flash."

Suppose that, when I made the statement "I am hearing a squeaky noise", I was dreaming or delirious, and no normal waking person in my neighbourhood at the time would admit that he heard anything of the kind. A person who was aware of these facts would be likely to say to me: "You are not really hearing a noise, for no such noise as you describe is going on here at present. You are suffering from an auditory hallucination." Yet I should, no doubt, be having an auditory experience of a certain kind; and it must presumably be rather like the sort of auditory experience which I have on occasions when everyone would admit that I am hearing a squeaky noise.

I propose to say that, *whenever* I have the kind of experience which I should naturally record by the sentence "I am hearing a squeaky noise", I am having an experience which "sensibly manifests squeakiness to me". This is meant to be a purely descriptive statement, involving no theory or detailed analysis, and therefore acceptable to everyone. If I were to add that having an experience which sensibly manifests squeakiness consists in prehending a certain particular as squeaky in quality, I should be analysing and theorising and I should not expect everyone to agree with me.

Now it is evident that there is another factor beside that which I have just mentioned. In each case the experient



would have been prepared to make the judgment: "There is a squeaky noise going on outside my body now, and any normal person who was in the neighbourhood at the time would hear it." I do not say that the experient need *actually* make this judgment; I say only that he *would* make it if there were occasion to make a judgment on this particular point. We can call this a "perceptual judgment", and we can say that it is "founded upon" the percipient's contemporary experience which sensibly manifests squeakiness to him.

At this point there are two mistakes which we are liable to make. (i) Even if a perceptual judgment, *founded upon* a simultaneous sensory or quasi-sensory experience, actually occurs, we must not imagine that the judgment is reached by *inference* and that one of the premises is the fact that such and such a sensory or quasi-sensory experience is occurring. This would be a far too intellectual and "highbrow" account of the facts. The utmost that we can say is this. If the perceptual judgment were made, and someone questioned it, the percipient might try to *defend* it by argument. And, if so, his argument would take the form: "I am having an experience which sensibly manifests such and such a characteristic to me; and, in the circumstances in which I am now placed, it is not likely that I should be having such an experience unless a physical event of the kind which I assert to be taking place here and now were really doing so."

(ii) As I have said, a perceptual experience may occur without a perceptual judgment being actually made by the percipient. On the other hand, it is not a complete analysis of such an experience to say that the percipient "*would* be prepared to make such a judgment *if* occasion arose". It seems clear to me that there is an *actual* modification of experience, corresponding to this *disposition* to make a certain perceptual judgment. I assume that this is what Prof. Price has in mind when he talks of "perceptual acceptance" of a proposition as an essential factor in the experience of perceiving.

I shall say that a man is "having an auditory perception" when and only when the following conditions are fulfilled: (a) He is having an experience which sensibly manifests to



him some auditory character, such as squeakiness, boomingness, etc. (b) He founds upon this a perceptual acceptance of a proposition of the form: "There is a noise of this character going on now outside my body, and any normal waking person who was in the neighbourhood at the time would hear it." The second condition could not be fulfilled without the first, but there is no reason why the first should not be fulfilled without the second. Lastly, if and only if conditions (a) and (b) are both fulfilled, the percipient may in addition either explicitly believe or perceptually accept a proposition of the form: "This noise comes from a (or the) so-and-so," where the phrase "so-and-so" describes a material thing if it describes anything. If and only if all three conditions are fulfilled, the percipient would say: "I am hearing a (or the) so-and-so."

Now the propositions which are perceptually accepted may be true or false. If conditions (a) and (b) were fulfilled, but the proposition accepted under (b) were false, we should say that the experient's auditory perception was "hallucinatory". If the proposition accepted under (b) were true, we should say that his auditory perception is "non-hallucinatory". Suppose now that condition (c) were fulfilled beside (a) and (b). The proposition accepted under (c) might be true or false, even though the proposition accepted under (b) were true. If the perception be not hallucinatory, but the proposition accepted under (c) be false, we may say that the experient's auditory perception is "mislocated". An hallucinatory auditory perception would not be called an experience of "hearing" by anyone who recognised it to be hallucinatory. We should say that the experient "thought he was hearing" or "dreamed he was hearing", but that he was not *really* hearing. But a non-hallucinatory auditory perception would be called an experience of "hearing", even though it were mislocated. We should say of the experient: "He really is hearing the rhythmic booming noise which he claims to be hearing; he is mistaken in thinking that he hears the Trinity clock, for the noise really comes from the bell at the University church."

The reader must notice that I have deliberately defined

“having an auditory perception” in such a way that a man could be correctly said to be “having an auditory perception of a squeaky noise” even though he were dreaming or delirious and no such noise were going on in his neighbourhood at the time. Provided that he is having an experience which sensibly manifests squeakiness to him, and that he is basing on this a perceptual acceptance of the proposition “There is a squeaky noise going on outside my body now, and if any normal waking person were in the neighbourhood now he would hear it”, he is *having an auditory perception* of a squeaky noise, according to my definition. But he is not *hearing* a squeaky noise unless the proposition which he perceptually accepts is true. In a precisely similar way I should define “having a visual perception of a red flash”, and should distinguish it from “seeing a red flash”. The former, as defined by me, is a *purely* psychological statement. The latter involves the former, but it also involves the *non-psychological* statement that the proposition which the experient perceptually accepts is true.

If the above psychological analysis of auditory and visual perceptions of physical events be accepted as correct, so far as it goes, three further questions at once arise. (i) Can we analyse the experience which sensibly manifests squeakiness or redness to the percipient? Can it, or must it, be regarded as a prehension by him of a certain particular as characterised by squeakiness or as characterised by redness? (ii) What precisely is the percipient knowing, believing, or uncritically accepting when he utters the sentence: “I am hearing a squeaky noise”? (iii) How far is he justified in believing what he believes or in uncritically accepting what he uncritically accepts on such occasions?

1.3. *Sensibilia and Sensa*. To many philosophers it has seemed evident that to have an experience which sensibly manifests a certain sensible quality, e.g., squeakiness, redness, coldness, etc., is to be *prehending* a certain particular as characterised by that quality, i.e., as squeaky or as red or as cold, etc. Moreover, it has seemed evident to many philosophers that a particular cannot be prehended as having a certain sensible quality unless it does in fact have that

quality. If both these propositions be accepted, it is absolutely certain that there are squeaky particulars, and red particulars, and cold particulars. And this would be just as certain even if all the human race had always been dreaming or delirious. If the second proposition be doubted, it is possible that no particular is squeaky or red or cold, even though the first proposition is accepted as certain.

Now we may give the name of "sensibilia" to those particulars which, if the first proposition is true, are prehended (whether correctly or incorrectly) as having sensible qualities whenever an experience occurs which sensibly manifests such a quality. The prehending of a sensible as having such and such a sensible quality may be called "sensing" it. A sensible which, when sensed by a human being, is sensed as having an auditory quality will be called an "ostensibly auditory sensible". If it is sensed as having the more determinate auditory quality of squeakiness, it will be called an "ostensibly squeaky sensible". Similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to other sensible qualities; thus we shall talk of an "ostensibly visual sensible", of an "ostensibly red sensible", and so on.

The word "sensible" is meant to cover particulars which are prehended as squeaky or as red, etc., in dreams or delirium, as well as those which are prehended in normal waking life through the stimulation of the eyes, ears, skin, etc. And the word "sensing" is meant to cover the prehending of such particulars in both cases. If it should ever be desirable to draw a distinction, this can be done as follows. We should begin by distinguishing between "sensory" and "quasi-sensory" experiences. If we regard both of them as consisting in prehending certain particulars as having certain sensible qualities, we can call the prehended particulars "sensibilia" and "quasi-sensibilia" in the two cases. And we can call the act of prehending them "sensing" or "quasi-sensing" according to whether the prehended particulars are sensibilia or quasi-sensibilia. In general I shall use the term "sensibilia" to cover quasi-sensibilia, and the term "sensing" to cover quasi-sensing.

For the present purpose I propose to define the word "sensum" as follows. It is to mean a sensible which *really* has some sensible quality or other, i.e., really has one or other of the qualities which sensibilia are prehended as having. It is not part of the definition of a "sensum" that it is a sensible which has *that* identical sensible quality which *it* is prehended as having. If a certain sensible, which is prehended as cold and is not prehended as red, were in fact red and not cold, it would still be a sensum on the present definition. For it would really have a sensible quality which *some* sensibilia ostensibly have, though it would not have that identical sensible quality which *it* ostensibly has. With these definitions we may say that every sensible is ostensibly a sensum, and that an ostensibly red sensible is ostensibly a red sensum.

At this point the reader should note carefully that the definitions just given leave open the following possibilities: (i) They neither entail nor exclude the proposition that there are or may be unsensed sensibilia. (ii) They neither entail nor exclude the proposition that one and the same sensible may be sensed by several people. (iii) They neither entail nor exclude the proposition that one and the same sensible may be sensed on several different occasions by one or by several people. (iv) They involve no special theory about the relation between the sensible which a percipient senses and the physical event or material thing which he perceives through sensing this sensible. So far as the definitions go, the sensed sensible might *always* be identical with the perceived physical event or might *always* be a part of the surface of the perceived material thing, as the case may be. Equally, so far as the definitions go, this might *never* be true.

Evidently the existence of sensibilia and that of sensa is bound up with the truth or falsehood of certain theories about sensory experiences. The following questions present themselves at this point: (i) Is it always, or sometimes but not always, or never the case that having an experience which sensibly manifests a certain sensible quality consists in prehending a certain particular as having that quality? If this



analysis of sensory experiences is *never* correct, there are no sensibilia. If it is *ever* correct, there are sensibilia. (ii) Suppose that this analysis is correct in some cases, and therefore that there are sensibilia. Do any of the sensible qualities which sensibilia are prehended as having really belong to any sensibilia? If any sensible has any of these qualities, there are *sensa*. If every sensible has one or other of these qualities, then all sensibilia are *sensa*. If no sensible has any of these qualities, there are no *sensa*, though there are sensibilia. (iii) Does every sensible have precisely those sensible qualities which it is prehended as having? If so, every sensible which ostensibly has the sensible quality *q* really *is* a *sensum* which really *has* the quality *q*. (iv) Supposing that there are sensibilia, what is the relation between the sensible which a percipient senses and the physical event or material thing which he perceives through sensing this sensible?

## 2. McTaggart's Account of Sense-Perception.

We are now in a position to consider McTaggart's opinions on these questions. They will be found in Chaps. xxxiv and xxxv of *The Nature of Existence* and in §§65 to 76, inclusive, of *Some Dogmas of Religion*. The latter passages are reprinted with little modification in §§364 to 366 and 370 to 371, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*; so it is plain that McTaggart did not substantially alter his views.

McTaggart is concerned primarily with the perception of material things. He does not explicitly distinguish this from the perception of physical events, and therefore he does not consider the relations between the two. Again, he does not trouble to consider separately extra-somatic and intra-somatic sense-perception, nor does he discuss the special peculiarities of sight, hearing, and touch. I think it is fair to remember that most philosophers who have treated this problem have concentrated almost entirely on the perception of material things and on the senses of sight and touch. And it is fair to remember that McTaggart never professed to treat the problem elaborately and as a main issue. It was incidental to his main purpose, and he gave to it the amount of attention



which he thought it deserved in the context of his system of philosophy.

McTaggart defines a "material substance" as one which possesses shape, size, position, mobility, and impenetrability. He suggests in §362 of *The Nature of Existence* that mobility may not be an essential factor in the notion of material substance. Since a "substance", in McTaggart's sense, need not be a continuant, and since a material thing certainly would be a continuant, it would seem necessary to add to the definition the property of being a continuant. It may be, however, that this is supposed to be involved in the causal property of impenetrability. In any case it seems safer to add it explicitly.

2.1. *The Theory in 'Some Dogmas of Religion'*. Now the argument which is common to *The Nature of Existence* and *Some Dogmas of Religion* may fairly be summarised as follows. Belief in the existence of matter is, no doubt, primitive and is not reached by inference. Nevertheless it can be questioned and it needs justification. In this respect it is unlike the non-inferential belief that there occur, from time to time, sensory experiences which manifest colour or taste or smell or pain. Now the only way in which anyone could hope to justify his belief in matter is by means of *causal* inference from the occurrence, the changes, and the correlations of human sensory experiences, as effects, to material things and processes as essential cause-factors in producing them. McTaggart admits that we probably are justified in concluding that an essential cause-factor in producing our sensory experiences is processes in entities of *some* kind, which exist and change and interact independently of our minds. But he holds that we have no justification for ascribing to these entities either the qualities of shape, size, position, mobility, and impenetrability, or the qualities of colour, temperature, hardness, etc. And, if we try to ascribe to them qualities of the first kind and deny to them qualities of the second kind, the situation is worse. For now we cannot even *conceive* of such objects, and therefore *a fortiori* cannot be justified in believing that there are such objects.

McTaggart's ground for denying the validity of such causal arguments is that they all rest on the principle that a cause must resemble its effect. This principle is not self-evident, and is known to be false. It might fairly be added that, even if the principle were true, the causal argument would not be much better off. For presumably the principle would be that the *immediate total cause* of an effect must resemble the latter. Now the alleged physical processes in material things which are said to cause our sensations are certainly neither the immediate nor the total causes of the latter. At most they are *cause-factors* in remote causal *ancestors* of our sensations.

Now nothing could properly be called a "material thing" unless (a) it were existentially independent of our minds and were a factor in causing those sensations which we have when we claim to be "perceiving material things"; and (b) it were characterised at least by shape, size, position, and impenetrability. We may admit that there probably are existents which answer to condition (a); but we have seen that there is not the least reason to believe that they also answer to condition (b). Again, granted that there were existents, viz., *sensa*, which answered to condition (b), there is not the least reason to believe that any of them would also answer to condition (a). Therefore there is not the least reason to believe that there are any existents which answer to *both* clauses in the definition of "material thing". As McTaggart says: "Matter is in the same position as the Gorgons or the Harpies. Its existence is a bare possibility to which it would be foolish to attach the least importance" (*Some Dogmas of Religion*, § 73). We might describe this conclusion of McTaggart's as an agnostic form of the Causal Theory about ostensibly material things.

In other passages, however, McTaggart writes as if he held a different theory. In § 74 of *Some Dogmas of Religion* he raises the question: "What are the propositions of science really about?" He answers that they are propositions about the actual and possible sensory experiences of human beings. This seems to imply what might be called the Phenomenalist Theory about ostensibly material things. If the Causal

Theory were true, the propositions of science would presumably be about those independent existents, of whatever kind they may be, which are essential though remote cause-factors determining our sensations. My impression is that McTaggart really accepted a form of the Causal Theory, and not the Phenomenalist Theory, about ostensibly material things. I think that what he means to assert may be put as follows. There *is* good reason to admit the existence of independent substances of some kind, which are essential but remote cause-factors in determining our sensations. There is *no* good reason to ascribe to them geometrical, kinematic, kinetic, or secondary qualities. The utmost that science can tell us about any of them is that it would produce such and such sensations in a normal human observer under certain conditions; and these conditions can themselves be described only in terms of actual and possible human sensations.

No doubt many people would fasten on the last clause in this statement, and would use it as an argument against the first clause in it. Some would say that we have no *ground* for going beyond the conditional propositions about actual and possible sensations and postulating independent cause-factors, about which nothing further can be said than that they are the categorical and non-sensible basis of these conditional propositions about sensations. Others would say that they can attach no *meaning* to the postulate as distinct from the conditional propositions which it is supposed to "account for". However this may be, I have little doubt that McTaggart considered the combination of the two clauses to be both intelligible and justifiable.

2.2. *Further Development in 'The Nature of Existence'*. Two remarks may be made about the theory which we have just expounded. (i) It admits that the existence of material objects is a bare possibility, though it puts it on a level with the existence of Gorgons and Harpies. (ii) It presupposes no special view about the analysis of sensory experiences. It leaves untouched the question whether there are sensibilia, and, if so, whether any or all of them are *sensa*. In *The Nature of Existence* an attempt is made to prove that the existence of

material objects is *impossible*. And McTaggart argues that there are sensibilia and that there cannot be *sensa*.

The argument to prove that there cannot be particulars answering to the definition of "material things" or to the definition of "*sensa*" depends on the principles of Endless Divisibility and of Determining Correspondence. We must therefore defer consideration of it for the present. What remains to be done in this chapter is to consider McTaggart's account of sensibilia and of *sensa*. His statements on this subject will be found in Chap. xxxv of *The Nature of Existence*. The distinction which we have drawn between sensibilia and *sensa* makes it easy to state his position clearly.

(i) Suppose we describe "sensory experiences" as those experiences which seem *prima facie* to arise through the stimulation of some bodily sense-organ. Then there is no doubt that we have sensory experiences, some of which are visual, some auditory, some tactual, and so on. (ii) Sensory experiences seem *prima facie* to be prehensions of particulars as having certain peculiar qualities. (iii) If we really are prehending particulars in having sensory experiences, those particulars are sensibilia. McTaggart holds that there is no reason to doubt that having a sensory experience does consist in prehending a particular, and therefore that there is no reason to doubt that there are sensibilia. (iv) Many philosophers have thought that the sensibilia which any person senses are states of that person's mind. If this were so, sensibilia would be psychical particulars. McTaggart thinks that the philosophers who held this view did so only because they failed to distinguish clearly between the sensible which is sensed and the sensing of the sensible. They saw that the latter is a state of the percipient's mind; and, failing to distinguish the former from it, they thought that the sensible is a state of the percipient's mind. When this confusion is removed the opinion, which had no other foundation, collapses. (v) Whenever a person has a sensory experience he has "a spontaneous and natural tendency to believe in the existence of some piece of matter, corresponding to and causing" the sensible which he is then sensing. This belief is, in any case, not justified; and it



can be shown to be mistaken, since it can be shown that nothing could possibly answer to the definition of a "material thing" (*Nature of Existence*, §373). (vi) Sensibilia must, *prima facie*, be distinguished from the material things in the existence of which they cause those who sense them to believe. For consider the case of two men who would commonly be said to be both seeing the whole of the top of the same penny simultaneously from different positions. They are sensing sensibilia which are *prima facie* dissimilar and therefore numerically different. Therefore one at least of these sensibilia cannot be identical with the top of the penny which both men claim to be seeing. (vii) If any sensible had any of the qualities which sensibilia are sensed as having, it would be a sensum. Therefore every sensible is ostensibly a sensum. (viii) McTaggart raises the question whether the characteristics which sensibilia are sensed as having are simple *qualities*, such as redness, squeakiness, etc., or are *relational properties* of a peculiar kind which he denotes by such phrases as "being a sensum of redness", "being a sensum of squeakiness", etc. He decides that the former is the right alternative. (ix) No matter which of these two alternatives is accepted, we can show, by means of the Principles of Endless Divisibility and Determining Correspondence, that nothing could possibly have the characteristics which sensibilia are sensed as having. Therefore there are no sensa; though there are sensibilia and they are all ostensibly sensa. (x) Some qualities which sensibilia are sensed as having, e.g., roundness, coldness, etc., are also ascribed to material things. But some qualities which sensibilia are sensed as having are not ascribed to material things at all. McTaggart mentions intensity and extensity as examples. And even those ostensible qualities of sensibilia, such as roundness, which are ascribed also to material things are "not attributed to the data in the same way in which they are attributed to matter" (§376).

The ten propositions, stated above, constitute McTaggart's account of sensibilia and sensa. I will now make some comments on them. I will begin by taking the first four together.

I think it is important to insist that it is by no means



obvious that to have a sensory experience which sensibly manifests a certain sensible quality *q* is *always* to be prehending a certain particular as having the quality *q*. I am inclined to think that the tendency, already noted, in many philosophers to confine their attention to visual and tactual perception has biassed them in favour of this doctrine. It is certainly very difficult to believe that to have a sensory experience which sensibly manifests redness can be anything else than to prehend a certain particular as a redly coloured expanse. But suppose we consider sensory experiences which sensibly manifest olfactory qualities. Is it not almost equally difficult to believe that to have an experience which sensibly manifests the ammoniacal smell-quality consists in prehending a certain particular as having that quality? And, when we come to intra-somatic experiences which sensibly manifest such qualities as "tiredness" and "nausea", does not the prehensive analysis, which seems so obvious for visual experiences, become quite incredible? Is it not plain that to have an experience of tiredness or of nausea is to *feel tiredly* or to *feel sickly*, and is *not* to prehend a certain particular as qualified by tiredness or by nausea?

It seems to me then that an unbiassed inspection of all the facts suggests that *some* sensory experiences, e.g., visual ones, almost certainly do consist in prehending certain particulars as qualified by certain sensible qualities; that *some* such experiences, e.g., sensations of tiredness or of sickness, almost certainly cannot be analysed in this way; and that, with regard to certain intermediate sensory experiences, e.g., those which manifest auditory qualities, it is very difficult to tell whether this analysis does or does not apply. Therefore, whilst I am fairly certain that there are sensibilia which are ostensibly coloured, I am not at all certain that there are sensibilia that are ostensibly squeaky or ostensibly ammoniacal in smell-quality. McTaggart simply assumes, without examination, that the analysis which applies to sensory experiences of the visual kind *must* apply to sensory experiences of every kind. He therefore assumes that there must be ostensibly squeaky, ostensibly ammoniacal, and ostensibly

sickly particulars, for no better reason than that there are sensory experiences which sensibly manifest squeakiness, ammoniacal smelliness, and nausea.

Now all this has an important bearing on the subject of McTaggart's fourth proposition, i.e., the question whether sensibilia are states of mind of the person who senses them. McTaggart says that many philosophers have believed that this is the case, and he ascribes this belief to a failure to distinguish between act of sensing and sensible. Now I very much doubt whether this way of putting the question is fair to these philosophers. It presupposes that they accept the principle that to have a sensory experience which sensibly manifests the quality *q* is toprehend a certain particular as having the quality *q*, and that they then assert that such particulars are always states of the mind which senses them. I suspect that many of the philosophers to whom McTaggart ascribes this opinion never made the assumption which the question presupposes, and that they would have rejected it if it had been proposed to them for consideration. I suspect that they started at the opposite end of the scale, viz., with sensory experiences, such as bodily sensations, which are not *prima facie* prehensions of particulars; and that they assumed that *all* sensory experiences are of this kind.

Even if the prehensive analysis of all sensory experiences be accepted, I doubt whether the statement that all sensibilia are states of the mind which senses them is an accurate expression of the doctrine which these philosophers were concerned to maintain. I suspect that the starting-point of their doctrine is the following fact. Suppose that a person has clearly seen and firmly grasped the distinction between an auditory sensum (i.e., a particular which *is* squeaky or booming in a perfectly literal non-dispositional sense) and the vibratory motion of the air which is commonly believed to be a necessary condition of having an auditory sensation. Suppose that he then asks himself the question: "Is it conceivable that any particular should *be* squeaky or booming, in this literal non-dispositional sense, unless it were *being prehended* at the time *as* squeaky or booming by some mind?"

Many people would answer that it is not conceivable; that the suggestion does not seem to them to be intelligible. Now this conviction might be generalised, and it could then be expressed as follows in our terminology. "Possibly there may be unsensed *sensibilia*, but it is meaningless to suggest that there may be unsensed *sensa*. A sensible cannot possibly have any sensible qualities unless it is actually being sensed by some mind; and, by definition, a 'sensum' is a sensible which actually has some sensible quality."

Now, if anyone accepted this general principle, his obvious next step would be to reject the notion of unsensed *sensibilia*. It is true that the abstract possibility of such particulars has been granted. But it is asserted that an unsensed sensible could not possibly have any quality that any sensible is sensed as having. Thus nothing positive could be said of any unsensed sensible except that it is a particular which, if it were sensed at any time, would then and only then have some sensible quality or other. The notion of unsensed *sensibilia* would thus evaporate.

At this stage then, the sensible has become a distinguishable, but *existentially inseparable*, factor in the sensory experience. Now the sensory experience is a state of the person who senses the sensible. And the sensible, on the present view, is an existentially inseparable factor in this state. It is then mainly a question of verbal convention whether one says or refuses to say that the sensible is a state of the mind which senses it.

I believe that this is the way in which the philosophers whom McTaggart has in mind, arrived or might have arrived at the doctrine which he ascribes to them. If I am right, this doctrine is not necessarily based on a failure to distinguish between act of sensing and sensible. Many people who are quite clear about this distinction find it impossible to conceive that a particular should have any sensible quality unless it were actually being sensed by someone as having that quality.

What are we to say about this alleged self-evident impossibility? I think it is worth while to remark that the

principle seems *most* plausible in just those cases where it is *least* plausible to hold that the sensory experience which sensibly manifests a certain quality is a prehension of a certain particular as having that quality. It does seem to me almost nonsensical to suggest that there might be sensibilia which literally have the toothachy quality or the ammoniacal smell-quality even though no one is sensing them as having those qualities. But it also seems to me very doubtful whether sensory experiences which sensibly manifest the toothachy quality or the ammoniacal smell-quality are prehensions of sensibilia at all. Conversely, the principle seems *least* plausible in just those cases where it is *most* plausible to hold that the sensory experience is a prehension of a sensible as having a certain sensible quality. I do not find the least difficulty in conceiving that there might be particulars which quite literally have sensible redness and sensible roundness even though no one is sensing them as having those qualities. And visual experiences are those sensory experiences which seem to me to be quite certainly prehensions of particulars as having colours and shapes and sizes.

To sum up on this question: I am not prepared to accept the general principle, because I do not find it evident in the case of the sensible qualities which are manifested in *visual* sensory experiences. And, in the cases where it seems most plausible, I suspect that it is just a rather contorted substitute for a straightforward denial that the prehensive analysis of sensory experiences is applicable.

I will take next the eighth proposition in my summary of McTaggart's doctrine of sensibilia and sensa. The question is whether sensibilia are prehended as having simple *qualities*, such as redness, squeakiness, etc., or as having *relational properties* of a peculiar kind which McTaggart denoted by such phrases as "being a sensum of redness", "being a sensum of squeakiness", and so on.

McTaggart discusses this question in §375. His argument may be put as follows. When I have a visual perception I am sensing a visual sensible and I am automatically and uncritically taking for granted that it is an appearance of a



certain material thing. If I make a perceptual judgment, I shall ascribe to this assumed material thing some specific colour-predicate, e.g., red, or blue, or green, as the case may be. Now it is certain that the specific *colour-predicate* which I ascribe on any such occasion is correlated with and determined by the specific form of the *sensible characteristic* which I prehend the sensible as having on that occasion. The question that remains is this. "Is the characteristic which I call 'red', e.g., and ascribe to the assumed material thing, simply *identical with* the sensible characteristic which I prehend the sensible as having? And, if not, how is the former related to the latter?"

Now words like "red", "blue", etc., when predicated of assumed material things, are certainly not meaningless to us; they denote characteristics of which we have ideas. And it seems certain that our ideas of such characteristics must be of empirical origin. Therefore we must have derived our idea of the characteristic which we denote by the word "red", e.g., either (*a*) from preheating certain particulars as having *this* characteristic; or (*b*) from preheating certain particulars as having some complex characteristic which contains this as a constituent, and then analysing the complex into its elements. McTaggart decides, on introspective grounds, that he did *not* perform any such analysis when he acquired the idea of redness, as applied to material things. He also decides on introspective grounds that the characteristic which he prehends the visual sensible as having when he calls an assumed material object "red" is *not* complex. He therefore rejects the second alternative, and accepts the first, which he regards as the only one remaining. That is, he holds that, when I sense a visual sensible and ascribe redness to the assumed material thing of which I take it to be an appearance, I am ascribing to the latter *that very same* sensible characteristic which I am preheating the former as having.

There are two remarks to be made on this argument. (i) There is a third alternative beside the two which McTaggart recognises. The characteristic which I have in mind when I call an assumed material thing "red" might be complex, and



it might contain as a constituent the sensible characteristic which I prehend the sensible as having. Thus the idea of it might have been reached by *synthesising* the correlated sensible characteristic with others, and not by *analysing* the latter and isolating one factor in it. E.g., is it not possible that, when I call a material object "red", I mean that it has the property of presenting a certain characteristic kind of visual appearance to any normal observer who sees it in daylight? If this were so, "red", as applied to assumed material things, would *not* denote any characteristic which visual sensibilia are prehendend as having. It would denote a complex characteristic, in which the sensible characteristic which certain visual sensibilia are prehendend as having is a constituent. If this constituent is also given the name "red", then that word is used ambiguously. It would then be necessary to distinguish between "being sensibly red" and "being perceptually red".

I do not think that McTaggart need have objected to this alternative. For the conclusion which he is primarily concerned to maintain is that the characteristics which visual sensibilia are prehendend as having are *simple qualities* and not complex characteristics. There is nothing in the present alternative to cast doubt on that conclusion. What is rendered doubtful is whether "red", "blue", etc., as applied to assumed material things, denote such simple qualities.

(ii) In the case of visual perception I think that McTaggart's *conclusion* may well be materially correct on both counts. I am inclined to think that, when a man has the kind of experience which he would describe as "seeing a pillar-box" and makes the judgment "That thing is red", he *is* ascribing to the assumed material thing *that very same simple quality* which he prehends the visual sensible as having. But let us now consider, e.g., olfactory perception. Suppose I have an olfactory sensation which sensibly manifests to me the ammoniacal smell-quality. And suppose that I uncritically take for granted that this is an appearance of a certain material thing. I may make the perceptual judgment "That stuff smells ammoniacal". Then, even if the sensory experience

consists in prehending a certain sensible as having the ammoniacal smell-quality, it is certain that I am *not* ascribing to the assumed material thing this very same quality. What I am ascribing to the material thing is the property of producing in any normal observer who sniffs it sensations which manifest the ammoniacal smell-quality. Once again we see the danger of assuming that *visual* sensation and visual perception can be taken as typical instances of *all* sensation and *all* perception respectively.

I will now take together the fifth, sixth, and tenth of the propositions in the summary of McTaggart's doctrine. These are about the relation between sensing and perceiving, and about the relation which is assumed to hold between the sensed sensible and the perceived material thing.

I think that we can at once reject the fifth proposition. It is simply untrue to say that, whenever a person has a sensory experience, he has a "spontaneous and natural tendency to believe in the existence of some piece of matter corresponding to and causing" the sensible which he is sensing. In the case of certain kinds of visual sensation, viz., where the sensible is sensed as a persistent coloured expanse of fairly definite shape, it is true that the experient has a "spontaneous and natural tendency to believe in the existence of some piece of matter *corresponding to*" the sensible. But it is utterly false that he tends naturally and spontaneously to regard the sensible which he is sensing as *caused by* this piece of matter. It would be much nearer the truth to say that he uncritically takes for granted that the sensible which he is sensing is literally *part of the surface of* a certain solid material thing. If the notion of cause and effect enters his mind at all in this connexion, it enters in the following way. He may take for granted that some *process* in the material thing is a necessary condition in causing him to *prehend* this part of its surface at this time.

If we now consider other kinds of sensory experience, the proposition is found to be equally untenable as a whole, though for a different reason. If I have an auditory sensation, I do, no doubt, tend uncritically to assume that this sensation is caused by a process in some bit of matter or other. The

belief is "spontaneous" and "natural", if this means merely "not reached by a process of inference". But, if it means, "primary, and not due to associations acquired in the course of the experient's life", I see no reason to admit that the belief is spontaneous or natural. I should think that it is certainly acquired through association of auditory experiences with visual and tactual experiences which were uncritically taken to be prehensions of material things.

The sixth proposition is that sensibilia must, *prima facie*, be distinguished from the material things in the existence of which they cause those who sense them to believe. It is evident from McTaggart's example that he is thinking only of visual sensibilia. And what he wants to say about them might be expressed more accurately as follows. "Although a person who is sensing a visual sensible as a persistent coloured expanse of fairly definite shape does tend *prima facie* to take it for a certain part of the surface of a certain material thing, yet reflexion and comparison show that, even if he were right in taking it to be an *appearance* of a certain part of the surface of a certain material thing, he is wrong in taking it to be any part of the surface."

Now McTaggart tries to prove this in the usual way from the fact that the top of a penny looks round from one position and looks elliptical from other positions. This may be a perfectly good argument for a person who denies the possibility of misprehension. For such a person anything that is sensed as round *is* round, and anything that is sensed as elliptical *is* elliptical. Therefore, if something is sensed as round and something is sensed as elliptical, there must be two particulars. But for McTaggart, who asserts the possibility and the actuality of misprehension, this argument is invalid. If a sensible need not have the characteristic which it is sensed as having, it is quite possible that the particular which is sensed as round and the particular which is sensed as elliptical may be one and the same particular. It is therefore quite possible, so far as this argument can tell us, that it is one and the same part of the surface of one and the same material thing.

The tenth proposition asserts that even those ostensible qualities of sensibilia which are ascribed also to material things are not attributed to the former in the way in which they are attributed to the latter. McTaggart gives two reasons for this. (i) "Material objects are held to be, e.g., both coloured and hard, while it is admitted that one sensum cannot have both these qualities." (ii) It is admitted that the same material thing can have at different times qualities which it could not have simultaneously. E.g., it might be spherical at one time and cubical at another. But no one would admit that one and the same sensum could be round at one time and square at another.

I do not think that there is anything in the first contention. We defined a "sensible" as a particular which, if prehended, is prehended as having some sensible quality. And we defined a "sensus" as a sensible which has some sensible quality. Obviously there is nothing in these definitions to rule out the possibility that one and the same sensum should be both coloured and hard. And I can see no kind of synthetic necessity in the proposition that any prehensible particular which had a sensible quality could have *only one* such quality. I suspect that McTaggart is tacitly assuming some definition of "sensus" which would make it contradictory for one and the same "sensus" to have two sensible qualities which fall under different determinables.

When I have the kind of perceptual experience which I should describe as "passing my hand over a lump of ice" I should say that I am sensing a certain sensible as both cold and smooth. Suppose that I also have the experience which I should describe as "looking at the same part of the surface of the ice as that which I am touching". I now sense a certain sensible as translucent. Now the natural assumption would be that it is one and the same particular which is prehended as cold and smooth by touch and as translucent by sight. I can see no kind of *a priori* objection to this naive common-sense view. Of course there may be certain facts which prove that the sensible which I sense by sight is always a different particular from that which I sense by touch, even when I



should say that I am seeing and touching the same part of the surface of the same material thing. But I suspect that any such argument would have to use a premise which McTaggart would have no right to use, viz., that every sensible which is sensed must have exactly those qualities which it is sensed as having.

We can now pass to McTaggart's second contention, viz., that one and the same *sensum* could not have different determinate forms of the same determinable quality, e.g., roundness and squareness, at different times. I am inclined to think that this is entirely a matter of definition. If there are *sensa*, they are particular existents. Now presumably a literally instantaneous particular would be a mere fiction. Therefore, if there are *sensa* at all, each of them presumably endures for *some* time. And, if every *sensum* endures for some time, it is impossible to think of any principle by which one could decide that a *sensum* may last for a second but could not possibly last for a twelve-month. Now we defined a "sensum" as a sensible which actually has some sensible quality. And we defined a "sensible" as a prehensible particular which, if prehended, is prehended as having a sensible quality. These definitions leave open the question whether one and the same sensible could have different determinate forms of the same determinable sensible quality at different times. And they leave open the question whether, if this were the case, we should say that there is one and the same *sensum*, which changes in quality; or that there is a *series of successive sensa*, each of which is constant in quality and dissimilar to its neighbours in the series.

The fact is that common sense has a number of familiar tests which together enable it to decide without difficulty in most cases whether it will or will not say that the same *material thing* has been present on several successive occasions. But the notions of "sensible" and "sensum" are technical and unfamiliar to common sense. Therefore philosophers must formulate for themselves the rules in accordance with which they are to decide whether the same *sensible*, or the same *sensum*, has been present on several successive occasions. This



is not easy to do, and there is no general agreement among philosophers in respect of the rules that they follow. McTaggart's unformulated rule seems to be that we are to talk of a *different* sensum whenever there is the least difference in the determinate form of the same determinable sensible quality, no matter what degree of similarity and continuity there may be in other respects.

I have now commented on eight of the ten propositions which together constitute McTaggart's theory on the present subject. Of the remaining two propositions the seventh is a mere consequence of definitions, and needs no discussion. The ninth is the proposition that nothing could possibly have the characteristics which sensibilia are sensed as having, and that therefore there can be no *sensa*. The discussion of this must be deferred. For, in the first place, the argument depends on the principles of Endless Divisibility and Determining Correspondence. And, secondly, if the conclusion be true, it is a peculiarly striking instance of McTaggart's general doctrine that we can apprehend a particular as having a characteristic which neither it nor any other particular has or could possibly have.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### OSTENSIBLE VOLITION

McTaggart's account of ostensible volition is to be found in Chap. XL of *The Nature of Existence*. He first gives a psychological analysis of volition, and then raises four questions about this kind of experience.

#### 1. McTaggart's Analysis of Volition.

McTaggart uses the word "volition" as equivalent to "desire". It is wider than, and inclusive of, "willing". Unless a man believes, with regard to a certain state of affairs which he is contemplating, that he can contribute by his action or inaction to continue it, to stop it, to initiate it, to prevent it, or to alter it, he cannot properly be said to *will* it or its opposite. But he can properly be said to *desire* a state of affairs with regard to which he has no such belief. E.g., I can desire that I should have behaved otherwise than I did behave on a certain past occasion, and I can desire that it shall be fine tomorrow. I think that desiring which is not willing is generally called "mere wishing". If so, volition, in McTaggart's sense, is a generic term which includes under it willing and mere wishing as two species.

Now desiring stands in a relation of one-sided dependence to cogitating. It is logically possible that a person should think of or perceive or imagine or remember *x* without desiring it or anything else. It is in fact logically possible (whether it be causally possible or not) that there should have been cogitations and no volitions. But it is logically impossible that a person should desire without desiring *something*, and it is logically impossible that he should desire *x* without thinking of it or perceiving it or imagining it or remembering it or cogitating it in some other way.

In opposition to this it might be said that one sometimes

has an experience which might be described as "wanting, without knowing what one wants". McTaggart answers that, in such cases, there is still cogitation of a desired object, but it is very vague and the object may be purely negative. One may be feeling aversion to the present situation as a whole and be wanting some change or other, but one may not have any clear idea as to what feature in the present situation one would wish to be altered.

I think that this is probably a correct account of such experiences. But McTaggart might have done well to refer to the distinction which some psychologists draw, in connexion with emotion, between having a certain emotion, e.g., being angry, and being in the corresponding "emotional mood", e.g., being cross. It seems quite clear that one could not have an actual emotion of anger unless one were cogitating, vaguely or determinately, some object, real or imaginary, at which the anger was directed. The emotional mood of crossness might be either anger at a very indeterminately cogitated object—"things in general"—or it might possibly be an *objectless* experience which has a certain psychical *quality*. Now a similar distinction might, I think, be drawn between a volition and a volitional mood. It is certain that one cannot have an actual experience of volition unless one is cogitating, vaguely or determinately, some object at which the volition is directed. It is possible that a volitional mood is really a volition with a very indeterminately cogitated object; but it seems to me possible that it is an objectless experience which has a certain psychical quality.

If then McTaggart were willing to distinguish between volitions and volitional moods, and to confine his statements to volitions, I should be quite certain that he is right on this point. If, on the other hand, he takes "volition" to cover volitional moods, I think he may very well be right, but I do not feel absolutely certain that he is.

The next step in McTaggart's argument is very important. He argues that a desire for  $x$  simply *is* a cogitation of  $x$ , qualified or toned in a certain characteristic way. This doctrine may be most clearly stated as follows. To *desire*  $x$  simply is to

*cogitate x desiringly*. McTaggart ascribes this doctrine to Prof. Moore, and refers to a review by the latter in *Mind* for 1910 of Messer's *Empfindung und Denken*. McTaggart's argument for this view is in §§ 445 and 446 of *The Nature of Existence*. He thinks that there is only one plausible alternative to this view, and that it can be refuted.

According to McTaggart the only alternative which is *prima facie* possible is the following. The experience called a "desire for *x*" might be a complex whole composed of two simpler experiences. One would be a pure cogitation of *x*, which is not a desire. The other would be an experience of objectless desiring, i.e., a desire which is not *for* anything. This objectless state of desiring must be united with this simultaneous pure cognition of *x* by a certain special relation *R* which does not relate it to other simultaneous pure cognitions in the same mind. The resultant complex experience is this mind's desire for *x*.

McTaggart rejects this theory on the following ground. "A state of desire for *x* is... directly and immediately a desire for *x*.... It does not require anything outside itself to make it a desire for *x*" (*Nature of Existence*, § 455, p. 134). In this quotation I have substituted the phrase "*for x*" for McTaggart's phrase "*of x*", because this expresses his meaning more clearly in the absence of the context.

This argument, as it stands, seems to me to be quite worthless. (i) It is irrelevant to the theory which it is meant to refute. That theory does not assert or imply that a *desire for x* needs something *outside* itself to make it a desire for *x*. On the contrary, it says that a desire for *x* is made such by something *inside* itself, viz., by its two constituents, one of which is a pure cogitation of *x* and the other of which is an objectless state of *desiring*. (ii) Was McTaggart's real meaning that an objectless state of desire cannot be made into a state of desire for *x* by anything outside itself? This is certainly not what he says, but it would at least be relevant to the theory which he is trying to refute. But, if this is what he means, it can hardly be called a *reason for* rejecting the theory; it is simply a direct rejection without any grounds

given. For the theory could be expressed by saying that an objectless state of desiring is made into a desire for  $x$  by entering into a certain relation  $R$  with a pure cogitation of  $x$ . (iii) It would be a relevant and a fair objection to the theory to say that the notion of an objectless state of desiring seems meaningless. But the theory could easily be modified to meet this objection. It could be restated as follows. "A desire for  $x$  is a complex experience, of which one constituent is a pure cogitation of  $x$  and the other is an objectless feeling of a certain kind. This objectless feeling is not a state of desiring any more than the pure cogitation of  $x$  is a state of desiring. The property of being a desire belongs *only* to complex experiences, consisting of two such constituents, neither of which is a desire, inter-related by a certain relation  $R$ . There can be no objectless desires; for such a complex experience always has for its object the object of that cogitation which is one of its constituents."

McTaggart has certainly produced no argument against the modified theory, and I do not know of any conclusive objection to it. It therefore remains standing as a possible alternative to his own theory that a desire for  $x$  is simply a cogitation of  $x$  qualified by a certain psychical quality, which might be called "desirefulness" or "longingness". But McTaggart's theory is the simpler of the two alternatives; and, on that ground, it may be accepted until someone produces some positive objection to it.

McTaggart holds that the quality which distinguishes cogitations that *are* desires from others which *are not* is simple and indefinable. This seems to me to be true. There is, however, one remark to be added. I would suggest that this quality is simply one species of emotional quality, and therefore that a desire is simply an emotion of a special kind. If so, it might be asked, why do we commonly regard desires as distinguished from *all* other emotions in a way in which no two other emotions are distinguished? I think that the answer may be as follows. Certain desires do differ from all non-volitional emotions in their *causal* properties. Any desire for  $x$  which is a state of willing, as distinct from a mere state of impotent



wishing, tends to set up a process directed to conserving or initiating  $x$ . It is true that desires which are states of mere wishing do not differ from non-volitional emotions by possessing this causal property. But, in the first place, most people would hardly hesitate to count states of mere wishing as a special class of emotional states. And, secondly, states of mere wishing do differ from all non-volitional emotions by their *qualitative* likeness to states of willing, which in turn differ from all other emotional states by having the peculiar *causal property* which I have mentioned.

## 2. Further Questions about Volition.

Having now completed our account of McTaggart's analysis of volition, we can consider the four further questions which he raises about it. I will discuss them in the order in which they occur.

2.1. *Alleged Necessary Condition of Desire.* The first question is whether there is any one characteristic such that only those things which have it are possible objects of desire. Two and only two characteristics have been alleged (by different people, of course) to be in this position. Some have held that a man can desire only what he believes will give him pleasure. Others have held that a man can desire only what he believes to be good. The latter view can take two forms. It may be held that a man can desire only what he believes to be good on the whole, and that he will desire this even though he believes that the effects on himself will be bad. Or it may be held that a man can desire only what he believes will be good in its effects on himself, and that he will desire this even though he believes that it will not be good on the whole. McTaggart rejects all these alternatives, on the ground that they conflict with his own and other men's experience. Even if we substitute for the wide term "desire" the much narrower term "deliberately choose", each of these alternatives remains in flagrant conflict with experience. I entirely agree with McTaggart on this point, and I am sure that these doctrines first arose and have since persisted only through verbal confusions.

2.2. *Connexion of Desire with Time and Change.* The second question is about the connexion between desire, on the one hand, and time and change, on the other. I am not altogether satisfied with McTaggart's way of stating the question, and I propose to treat it in my own way.

If "desiring" be taken to include mere wishing, desires which refer to time may be divided into those which refer to the past, those which refer to the present (including the immediate past and the immediate future), and those which refer to the future. It is obvious that most desires which refer to time fall under one or other of the following heads. (i) Wishes, which we know to be idle, that the past should have been in certain respects, positive or negative, unlike what it in fact was. (ii) Desires that some thing which is now existing, or some process which is now going on, shall continue in the immediate future without qualitative change, or that it shall continue with certain qualitative changes, or that it shall cease to exist or to happen. (iii) Desires that certain conceivable things, which do not now exist, shall or shall not exist in future; or that certain conceivable events shall or shall not happen in the remoter future.

Now, with regard to a past event which we know or believe to have happened, we should never say that we "wish that it had happened". We might say that we are "glad that it happened", and we might say that we "wish that it had not happened". Again, with regard to a conceivable past event which we know or believe not to have happened, we should never say that we "wish that it had not happened". We might say that we are "glad that it didn't happen", and we might say that we "wish that it had happened".

With regard to a thing which we know or believe to be existing, or an event which we know or believe to be happening, we should never say that we "wish that it were existing or that it were happening". We might say that we are "glad that it is existing or that it is happening", and we might say that we "wish that it were not existing or that it were not happening". With regard to a conceivable thing or event which we believe not to be now existing or now hap-

pening, we should never say that we "wish that it were not existing or were not happening". We might say that we are "glad that it is not existing or that it is not happening", and we might say that we "wish that it were existing or that it were happening".

It seems clear, then, that we do not talk of "desire" in reference to the past or the present unless there is a contrast between an actual state of affairs (past or present, positively or negatively characterised) and a conceived alternative. And it seems clear that, in such cases, it is only the alternative which is believed to be *unfulfilled* that we can be said to desire. On the other hand, we are said to be "glad" or "sorry" only at what we take to be an actual state of affairs, positive or negative. Here the thought of alternatives need not be present at all. This is expressed in language by the fact that the phrase "wish that" is always followed by a sentence containing a verb in the subjunctive mood, whilst the phrase "am glad that" is always followed by a sentence containing a verb in the indicative mood. E.g., "I am glad that it is fine", "I wish that it were not raining", "I am glad that I didn't lose my temper", "I wish that I hadn't lost my temper."

Now there is a third case possible about the past and the present. I may contemplate several alternatives, and I may be quite uncertain as to which of them is fulfilled and which is not. It would then be improper to use either the word "wish" or the phrase "am glad that" in reference to any of them. The phrase that we use on such occasions is "hope that". Suppose that a friend of mine is now having a difficult interview with someone, and I am not present at it. I cannot say: "I am glad that he is keeping his temper", for I do not know that he is doing so. I cannot say: "I wish that he were keeping his temper", for I do not know that he is not doing so. But I may have an experience which I could properly express by saying: "I hope that he is keeping his temper" or "I hope that he is not losing his temper." Precisely similar remarks would apply, *mutatis mutandis*, if I knew that the interview was over and did not know how my friend had behaved at it.

Now consider the case of God's existence, which McTaggart discusses in §448. A theist might have an experience which he could properly express by saying: "I am glad (or sorry) that God exists." He might have an experience which he could properly express by saying: "I wish that God didn't exist." But he could not properly say: "I wish that God existed" or "I am glad (or sorry) that God doesn't exist" or "I hope that God does (or does not) exist." An atheist could properly say: "I am glad (or sorry) that God doesn't exist." He could properly say: "I wish that God existed." But he could not properly say: "I wish that God didn't exist" or "I am glad (or sorry) that God exists" or "I hope that God does (or does not) exist." An agnostic could properly say: "I hope that God exists" or "I hope that God doesn't exist." But he could not properly express any wish or any gladness or sorrow about the existence or the non-existence of God.

Lastly, let us consider statements about the immediate or the remoter future. As before, the phrase "am glad that" is used only of an alternative which is expected to be realised. Thus I could say: "I am glad that the rain is going to stop" or "I am glad that you are going to meet Smith next week" only if I felt fairly certain that the rain *is* going to stop or that you *are* going to meet Smith next week. Again, "hope that" is used, as before, only of a conceived alternative with regard to which the speaker is quite uncertain as to whether it will be fulfilled or not. Thus I could say: "I hope that it will stop raining" or "I hope that you will meet Smith next week" only if I were quite uncertain whether it will or will not stop raining and whether you will or will not meet Smith next week. On the other hand, "wish that", when used about conceived future events, is not confined, as it was in the previous cases, to that alternative which is known or believed *not* to be realised. I could say: "I wish it would stop raining" or "I wish (or want) you to meet Smith" without feeling any conviction that it *will not* stop raining or that you *will not* meet Smith. If I were certain that you will not meet Smith, I might express my desire by saying: "I wish that you were going to meet Smith."



Now all this discussion so far has been about the use of certain words and phrases, viz., "wish that", "hope that" and "am glad (or sorry) that". These express certain experiences which, on any view, are very closely correlated with each other. At this stage it is natural to raise a question which is not merely about words and phrases. It may be put as follows. Seeing that the occasions on which we should use the phrases "wish that", "hope that", and "am glad that" differ *cognitively* in certain characteristic ways which we have indicated, and seeing that the experiences which we express by these phrases are so closely correlated with each other, is there any need to assume in addition a *non-cognitive* difference between these experiences? Is it necessary to suppose that these experiences, beside differing as cognitions in the ways indicated above, differ also in respect of *psychical quality*, as, e.g., anger differs from fear? Take, e.g., the three sentences: "I am glad that it was fine", "I hope that it was fine", and "I wish that it had been fine." The suggestion is that these express three experiences in which one and the same psychical quality qualifies three characteristically different kinds of cognitive state, viz., (a) a state of confident belief that it was fine, (b) a state of uncertainty as to whether it was fine or wet, and (c) a state of entertaining the proposition that it was fine, accompanied by a confident belief that it was wet. Again, take the three sentences: "I am glad that you are going to meet Smith", "I want you to meet Smith", and "I wish that you were going to meet Smith." The suggestion is that these express three experiences in which the one psychical quality already mentioned qualifies three characteristically different cognitive states, viz., (a) a confident belief that you will meet Smith, (b) a state of uncertainty as to whether you will meet Smith or not, and (c) a state of entertaining the proposition that you will meet Smith, accompanied by a confident belief that you will not.

Now the question which McTaggart asks in §448 of *The Nature of Existence* is "whether desire has any necessary relation to change". And his answer is that "desire is not necessarily directed towards change. It is primarily acquies-



cence". He admits that "acquiescence" is not a very appropriate word, but he thinks that it will be "useful to employ it occasionally as a synonym because it is universally admitted that acquiescence does not involve any relation to change".

Now I think that the question which McTaggart has in mind is really the following. "Does desire necessarily refer to an alternative which is either (a) known or believed *not* to have been, to be, or to be about to be realised, or (b) *not* known or believed to have been, to be, or to be about to be realised?" And I think that the answer is as follows. Even if the word "desire" is used to cover "mere wishing" and "mere hoping", we never do use it unless one or other of these conditions is fulfilled. But we do use the phrase "am glad (or sorry) that" with respect to the alternative (positive or negative) which we know or believe to have been, to be, or to be about to be realised. And it is quite plausible to hold that the *psychical quality* of our experience is precisely the same in the latter cases as it is in the former. This psychical quality, which is common to the experiences called "desiring" and the experiences called "being glad (or sorry) that" and is peculiar to such experiences, may be called "acquiescence".

Can we accept this doctrine? The question can be settled, if at all, only by introspection; and my introspection does not enable me to settle it for myself. What I can say is this. It does seem to me that the experiences which I call "willing", "mere wishing", and "hoping" are very much alike in their psychical quality. Either there is just one psychical quality, common to all of them, or else the different psychical qualities which they possess are like different shades of the same colour. I am more inclined to accept the second alternative. I can also detect a very marked resemblance in psychical quality between the experiences which I call "being glad that" and the three kinds of experience which I have just mentioned. But it does not seem to me that this experience resembles those nearly so closely as those experiences resemble each other. I should hesitate to extend the analogy of shades of the same colour to include the psychical quality of experiences of "being glad that".

Lastly we may ask whether one can properly speak of "wishing", "hoping", and "feeling glad that" in connexion with anything that is, and is recognised to be, necessary and timeless. It seems to me that one can. Consider, e.g., the case of an intelligent and honest Pythagorean at the time when it was still a matter of controversy whether the square-root of 2 is or is not a rational number. He would certainly have had an experience which he could properly express by saying: "I hope that the square-root of 2 is rational." Suppose now that he were shown the very simple argument which proves that it is not rational, that he followed this proof, and that he accepted the conclusion. Then he would have had an experience which he could properly express by saying: "I wish that the square-root of 2 had been rational." And he would have had an experience (whether the same or different we need not now ask) which he could properly express by saying: "I am sorry that the square-root of 2 is not rational." I think that anyone who talks to pure mathematicians who are keen on their subject will be told by them, and will see for himself, that there are some alternatives which they *want* to be true and others which they *want* to be false. Yet they know perfectly well that the alternatives which are true are *necessarily* true, that the alternatives which are false are *necessarily* false, and that it is nonsensical to suppose that any *change* could happen to the properties of numbers.

2.3. *The Nature of Aversion.* We often talk of "desire" and "aversion" as if they were two opposed forms of conation, as "hot" and "cold" are two opposed forms of temperature-quality. In §449 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart raises the question whether this is a correct account of the psychological facts. On introspective grounds he denies that it is. It appears to him that conation has one and only one form, viz., desire. This may, however, be directed to objects which are positively characterised or to objects which are negatively characterised. I may desire that  $X$  should happen or that  $S$  should be  $P$ , and I may desire that  $Y$  should not happen or that  $S$  should not be  $Q$ . In the latter cases I should be said to

“feel aversion to  $Y$  happening” or to “feel aversion to  $S$  being  $Q$ ”. He sums this up by saying that “all desires accept something, though that which they accept is often itself of a negative nature”.

I find this doctrine of McTaggart’s most unpalatable. Consider the three statements: “I wish I had not lost my temper”, “I wish I were not having toothache”, and “I hope I shall not catch cold.” If McTaggart is to be believed, they are equivalent respectively to the following three statements: “I contemplate with acquiescence the admittedly false proposition that I kept my temper”, “I contemplate with acquiescence the admittedly false proposition that I am not having toothache”, and “I contemplate with acquiescence the proposition, about whose truth or falsity I am uncertain, that I shall not catch cold.” Now, granted that these sentences express part of what is expressed by the corresponding sentences with which we started, surely they leave out another very important part. Surely I remember with *disquiescence* that I lost my temper, surely I apprehend my toothache with *disquiescence*, and surely I contemplate with *disquiescence* the possibility of having a cold. I should have supposed that in many cases *disquiescence* with something known or believed to be actual in the present or the past, or expected to become actual in the future, was psychologically primary; that it gave rise to the thought of an alternative; and that it invested this thought with the quality of acquiescence.

2.4. *Can every kind of Cogitation be a Desire?* All desires are cogitations. But there are various kinds of cogitation, and so the question arises whether there are any kinds of cogitation which *cannot* also be desires. This, if McTaggart is right, is equivalent to asking whether there are any kinds of cogitation which cannot be qualified by the psychical quality of acquiescence. McTaggart’s answer is that most of our ostensibly present and past and future desires are, in their cogitative aspect, ostensible states of supposing. But some of them are ostensible states of judging, a few of them are ostensible prehensions.

It is obvious that a wish that I had behaved otherwise than

I did, or a wish in the mind of an atheist that God existed, or a wish that it were not raining, or a wish that you were going to meet Smith next week involves an ostensible supposing as an essential factor. It seems to me equally obvious that it involves an ostensible judging, viz., an ostensible memory that I did behave in a certain way, or an ostensible belief that God does not exist, or an ostensible belief that it is raining, or an ostensible belief that you will not meet Smith. McTaggart would say that the quality of acquiescence qualifies the ostensible supposing in each case, and that there is no opposed quality of disquiescence which qualifies the ostensible judging. I should accept the first part of the statement and question or reject the second. But the first is enough for McTaggart's present purpose.

Again, it is obvious that a hope that my friend has not lost his temper, or a hope in the mind of an agnostic that God exists, or a hope that it will stop raining, or a hope that you will meet Smith involves an ostensible supposing as an essential factor. Here, so far as I can see, no ostensible judging is involved.

A state of willing that you shall meet Smith involves more than a mere ostensible supposing that you will do so. It involves ostensibly expecting with some degree of conviction, though not with complete conviction, that you will meet Smith.

The question that remains is whether a state of ostensible knowing or *full* belief or prehension is ever qualified by the psychical quality of acquiescence. McTaggart holds that it sometimes is, but he gives no examples. It seems to me that the question turns on the following prior question of fact. When I have the experience of "being glad that" is the psychical quality which characterises my cogitation the same as that which characterises my cogitation when I have the experience of wishing, of hoping, and of willing? If it is not exactly the same quality, is it at least another determinate form of the same determinable quality? If either of these questions can be answered in the affirmative, McTaggart's original question can be answered in the affirmative. Otherwise it cannot. For there is no doubt that the experience of



“being glad that” is, in its cogitative aspect, an ostensible knowing or full belief or prehension. Since I am very doubtful about the answer to the prior question, I am equally doubtful as to whether McTaggart is right in his answer to the present question.

2.5. *Importance of these Questions for McTaggart's System.*

The four questions which we have been discussing in this section are interesting and important in themselves. But they have a special importance in the further development of McTaggart's system, and it will be worth while to explain at this point exactly why this is so. McTaggart claims to prove, as we shall see at a later stage in this work, that every ostensible cogitation is really a prehension and *nothing but* a prehension. The characteristics of “being a supposing”, “being a judging”, “being an imaging”, and so on are all *delusive*. Two results follow. (a) Unless prehensions can be desires there can be no desires. For nothing could be a desire unless it were a cogitation, and all cogitations are prehensions. Now McTaggart is anxious to maintain that the characteristic of “being a desire” is not a delusive characteristic. (b) Even if cogitations which are *in fact* prehensions can be desires, it might be that no cogitation which is *ostensibly* a prehension can be a desire. It might be that only those prehensions which appear not to be such, but appear to be supposings or judgments or imagings, can be desires. If this had been the case, it would not have followed that the characteristic of “being a desire” is itself delusive; for there is no doubt that there are cogitations which are *ostensibly* supposings and are *not ostensibly* prehensions. But it would have followed that the property of being a desire is essentially bound up with error and delusion. No cogitation could be a desire unless it were misprehended as not being a prehension (which it in fact is) and as being a supposing or judging or imaging (which in fact it is not and cannot be). Now McTaggart is anxious to maintain that desire can exist in a self-conscious being whose cogitations are all *completely free from error*. It is therefore essential for him to hold that a cogitation which is, and is *prehended as being*, a prehension can be a desire.



### 3. Fulfilment and Frustration of Desire.

McTaggart treats this topic in §452 of *The Nature of Existence*. His doctrine is as follows. A desire is fulfilled if and only if it is a true cogitation; it is frustrated if and only if it is a false cogitation. E.g., I believe that I have hurt someone's feelings and wish that I had not done so. On McTaggart's view I am supposing acquiescently the proposition, which I disbelieve, that I have not hurt his feelings. If what I am supposing is false, my wish that I had not hurt his feelings is a frustrated wish. But suppose that in point of fact I am mistaken in believing that I have hurt his feelings. Then my supposition that I have not hurt his feelings is true, though I believe it to be false. In that case my wish is really a fulfilled wish, though I mistakenly believe it to be a frustrated one. If someone were to persuade me that I had not really hurt the man's feelings, I should say: "Then my wish was really fulfilled all the time." Similar remarks apply to an atheist's wish that God existed, or a theist's wish that God did not exist, or an agnostic's hope that God does (or that he does not) exist.

The case of desires which refer to the future is not, I think, quite so simple. Take, e.g., the experience of hoping that it will stop raining and the experience of willing to be polite to a bore whom I am going to meet. McTaggart would say that the hope *is* fulfilled if and only if the supposition that it will stop raining is true, and that the willing is fulfilled if and only if the supposition that I shall behave politely to the bore when I meet him is true. But surely we must substitute for "is fulfilled" the phrase "*will be* fulfilled". For even if the supposition about the future is in each case true, we do not say that the desire *is* fulfilled until the event which is supposed to be going to happen actually has happened. And, when we find that it has happened, and thus know that the supposition was true, we do not say retrospectively that the desire *was* fulfilled from the very first moment when it occurred. Similarly, we cannot say that a desire about the future *is* frustrated provided only that the supposition about

the future is false; we should say that such a desire *will be* frustrated if and when this supposition turns out to be false.

Lastly, we must consider the experience of "being glad that". It is not in accordance with usage to talk of this as being "fulfilled" or "frustrated". But, on the assumption that it consists of a state of knowing or full belief qualified by the same psychical quality of acquiescence as qualifies the state of supposing in the case of wishing, willing, and hoping, one could use these phrases about it. Suppose I fully believe that I created a good impression on a certain past occasion, or that I fully believe that it will stop raining within the next ten minutes. Suppose that I have the experience of being glad that I created a good impression, or being glad that it is about to stop raining. Suppose, lastly, that the emotional quality of my full belief when I am glad is simply that quality of acquiescence which characterises my suppositions and partial beliefs when I am wishing or hoping or willing. Then, if I really did create a good impression, we can say that my experience of gladness at having done so is "fulfilled". But, if I did not in fact create a good impression and am merely flattering myself that I did, we can say that my experience of gladness at having done so is "frustrated". Similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the experience of feeling glad that it is about to stop raining.

Suppose that my experience of being glad that I had made a good impression on a certain occasion is in fact frustrated. If I knew this fact about it, I could do so only retrospectively. For I do not recognise that the experience is frustrated until I recognise that my belief that I had made a good impression is false. But, as soon as I recognise this, it is replaced by doubt or disbelief in this proposition. Now the experience of being glad that I had made a good impression *consists in* having an acquiescent *full belief* that I did so. Therefore it has ceased to exist at the moment when I begin to believe that it is frustrated. So my judgment must take the retrospective form: "This experience which I had, but no longer have, was a frustrated experience."

Although a veridical cognition cannot be a frustrated desire,

it can be the object of a frustrated desire, as McTaggart points out in §453 of *The Nature of Existence*. Suppose that I know or fully believe that a person whom I dislike has suffered a misfortune, and suppose that this is in fact the case. If this knowledge or full belief is toned with acquiescence, it will be, on McTaggart's definition, a "fulfilled desire". But I may at the same time wish that I were not glad at my enemy's misfortune. This wish will be a frustrated desire. But the wish is, on its cognitive side, a supposition that I were not having an experience which I know that I am having.

McTaggart draws the following conclusion from his theory of fulfilment and frustration. If all a person's cogitations were *veridical cognitions*, he would have no frustrated desires. To this I should have to make two qualifications. (a) Cognitions of future events *are not* fulfilled desires, even though they be veridical and acquiescent, *until* the expected events have happened. Therefore even a person whose cogitations are all veridical cognitions might have unfulfilled desires at every moment of his life. All that we can say is that every desire which was unfulfilled at one moment would be fulfilled at some later moment. Such a person would have no *permanently* unfulfilled desires. (b) In my opinion such a person could have *fulfilled aversions*, i.e., veridical cognitions toned with disquiescence. What he could not have is *frustrated wishes* corresponding to his fulfilled aversions. In order to have these he would need to *suppose* an opposite state of affairs to that which he cognises with disquiescence. Now we are assuming that all his cogitations are cognitions, i.e., knowings, judgments, or prehensions. Therefore we are assuming that he cannot make suppositions at all. Such a being could have no hopes or wishes, and therefore no frustrated hopes or wishes. But, if I am right in thinking that there is a quality of disquiescence, opposed to acquiescence, he could have fulfilled aversions. Of course McTaggart would not admit this; because he denies that the quality of acquiescence has an opposite, and asserts that aversion consists in supposing acquiescently the negative of some actual state of affairs.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### OSTENSIBLE EMOTION AND OSTENSIBLE PLEASURE-PAIN

McTaggart's account of ostensible emotion is to be found in Chap. xli of *The Nature of Existence*. For our purpose it falls into two parts. One is a psychological analysis of emotion in general; and the other is a more detailed analysis of the emotion of love, which McTaggart believes to have an unique ontological importance. In the present chapter we are concerned only with the psychological analysis of emotion in general and love in particular, as they appear to us here and now. We are not now concerned with McTaggart's attempts to show that the emotion of love, and certain other emotions which depend on it, must exist at the stage which appears *sub specie temporis* to come at the end of time and in which all cogitations are veridical and ostensible prehensions in selves of selves and their experiences. Nor are we concerned now with his attempt to state the differences which there must be between love at that stage and love at those stages which appear *sub specie temporis* to come before the end of time and in which we grossly misprehend ourselves, our own experiences, and other selves and their experiences. All this belongs to a later division of our enquiry, since it depends on McTaggart's special principles of Endless Divisibility, of Determining Correspondence, and of the Unreality of Time, and on his special theory of Error.

#### 1. McTaggart's Analysis of Emotion.

McTaggart's general account of emotion is precisely parallel to his general account of volition. Every emotion is directed towards something, real or imaginary, positive or negative, which is cogitated by the person who feels the emotion. Apparent exceptions are dealt with in the usual way. What



is called a "general feeling of elation or depression" really consists in feeling elated or depressed *at* the sum total of what one is cogitating at the moment. In such cases the emotion is caused by some quality possessed by the experient at the time and not by any special feature in the objects which he is cogitating. McTaggart then tries to show, by an argument like that which he used in the case of volition, that to feel a certain emotion towards any object is to have a cogitation of that object which is characterised by a certain emotional quality. Thus to feel afraid of a snake is to perceive a snake fearfully or to think fearfully of a snake.

Both the premises and the argument are open to the same objections as I raised in the case of volition. As regards the premises, McTaggart should have distinguished between emotions and emotional moods. The former are certainly directed to cogitated objects. It *may be* that the latter are really just emotions directed towards very indeterminately cogitated objects. But it is also possible that they are *objectless* experiences with a certain psychical quality. As regards the argument, McTaggart fails to notice an alternative to his own theory which admits his premises and is not open to his objections. The alternative, as applied to the example of fearing a snake, may be put as follows. "Fearing a snake is a complex experience, of which one constituent is a pure cogitation of a snake and the other is an objectless feeling of a certain kind. This objectless feeling is not a state of fearing, any more than the pure cogitation of a snake is a state of fearing. The property of being an emotion of fear belongs *only* to complex experiences, consisting of two such constituents, neither of which is an emotion of fear, inter-related by a certain relation *R*. There can be no objectless emotions; for such a complex experience always has for its object the object of that cogitation which is one of its constituents."

McTaggart's argument (*Nature of Existence*, §456, p. 145) leaves this alternative quite untouched. He has therefore failed to prove that his analysis of emotion is true. But I know of no conclusive objection to it, and it is certainly



simpler than the alternative which I have stated. It is therefore reasonable to accept McTaggart's theory until someone produces some positive objection to it.

In the first footnote on p. 144 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart draws an important distinction which he elaborates further in §465. The distinction may be stated as follows. Some emotions are such that a person feels them towards a particular *in respect of* a certain quality. Thus I have emotional experiences which I should describe as admiring Smith *for* his courage, Brown *for* his good looks, Jones *for* his manners, and Robinson *for* his skill at golf. Again, if I feel a certain emotion towards a certain particular at a certain time, this event will have a cause. Among the cause-factors in its immediate total cause or in one of its remoter causal ancestors will be the occurrence of certain qualities. We can say of any such quality that it is a factor in causing us to feel this emotion towards this particular. Now McTaggart points out that it is essential to distinguish between feeling an emotion in respect of certain qualities and being caused to feel an emotion by the presence of certain qualities. I may, e.g., have an experience which I should describe as "admiring Smith in respect of his courage" even though Smith were not in fact courageous and I were mistaken in believing him to be so. This experience cannot possibly have been caused by the presence of courageousness in Smith, if he is not in fact courageous; though it may, of course, have been caused by the presence of the second-order relational property of "being believed by me to be courageous". Of course the quality in respect of which I feel a certain emotion towards a certain object may in fact be present in that object, and its presence may have been an essential factor in causing me to know or to believe that it is present. I may believe correctly that Smith is courageous because I have seen him perform certain actions which really have been signs of his courageous disposition. If so, the quality in respect of which I feel the emotion is at any rate a factor in a *causal ancestor* of the emotion though not in its *immediate* total cause. But, as we have seen, this need not be so. The quality in respect of which

I feel an emotion need not be a factor even in a causal ancestor of the emotion.

McTaggart holds that certain emotions are felt towards objects as such, and not in respect of any quality. He thinks that liking and repugnance, as contrasted with approval and disapproval, are not felt in respect of any quality. Now it is evident that the presence of certain qualities in an object is often a factor in causing a person to like or to dislike it. All kinds of minute peculiarities of bodily structure, intonation of speech, and so on, are undoubtedly factors in causing one to like or dislike a certain person. Yet one might be quite unable to discriminate these, and one would certainly not say that one liked or disliked him in respect of these qualities. This fact reinforces the distinction which McTaggart has drawn.

The distinction which McTaggart draws is obviously interesting and important, but I think that it needs a much more careful analysis than he attempts. I shall therefore try to carry the analysis a little farther. Let us first consider under what circumstances a person *A* would say that he is feeling the emotion *E* towards the object *O* in respect of the quality *q*. *A* would say this if and only if (i) he knew or believed that *O* has *q*, and (ii) he knew or believed that his knowledge or belief that *O* has *q* is a factor in causing him to feel the emotion *E* towards *O*.

Now consider the case of a second person *B*. *B* might admit that *A* believes *O* to have *q*. He might admit that *A* believes that his belief that *O* has *q* is a factor in causing him to feel the emotion *E* towards *O*. And yet *B* might doubt or deny that *A* is feeling the emotion *E* towards *O* in respect of *q*. *B* would do this if either (i) he knew or believed that *O* does *not* have *q*, or (ii) he knew or believed that *A*'s knowledge or belief that *O* has *q* is *not* a factor in causing *A* to feel the emotion *E* towards *O*. If either of these conditions were fulfilled, *B* would say to *A*: "You think that it is in respect of *q* that you feel the emotion *E* towards *O*, but you are mistaken." Yet there is no reason to doubt that *A* is having an experience which differs in a characteristic way from the

experience which he would be having if he merely felt an emotion towards *O* as such without considering *O*'s qualities.

We have here another instance of the unfortunate amphibology which we have already noticed in words like "hearing" and "seeing". They have a meaning which is partly psychological and partly ontological or epistemological. When we wanted to confine our attention to the purely psychological part of the total meaning we substituted the phrase "having an auditory perception of so-and-so" for "hearing so-and-so". It is evident that we must adopt a similar device here. I suggest that we should use the phrase "feeling the emotion *E* towards *O* *ostensibly* in respect of the quality *q*" when we want only to describe the experience psychologically. This is meant to leave open the question whether *O* does or does not have *q*, and whether the experient's belief that *O* has *q* is or is not a factor in causing him to feel *E* towards *O*. We shall say that *A* feels *E* towards *O* in respect of *q* if and only if we believe (i) that he feels *E* towards *O* *ostensibly* in respect of *q*, (ii) that *O* really has *q*, and (iii) that *A*'s belief that *O* has *q* really is a factor in causing him to feel *E* towards *O*.

McTaggart's doctrine may now be restated as follows. (i) Some emotions, e.g., admiration, are always felt towards objects *ostensibly* in respect of qualities. (ii) Some emotions, e.g., liking and disliking, are never felt towards objects *ostensibly* in respect of qualities. They are always felt towards objects as such. (iii) In the former case the quality in respect of which the emotion is *ostensibly* felt may have nothing to do with causing the emotion; and some other quality, in respect of which the emotion is not *ostensibly* felt, may be a factor in causing the emotion. (iv) In the latter case there may be some quality whose presence in the object is a factor in causing the emotion; but, if so, it cannot, by hypothesis, be a quality in respect of which the emotion is *ostensibly* felt.

I will make two comments on this doctrine. (i) To feel an emotion towards an object *ostensibly* in respect of a quality involves a certain amount of intellectual analysis and reflexion. The experient must have thought of the object as having this quality and he must have reflected on the causa-

tion of his emotion. Now it seems to me that the same emotion is sometimes felt towards an object as such and sometimes felt towards the same object ostensibly in respect of a quality. Sometimes this change happens in one direction and sometimes in the other. I will give an example of each case. If I suddenly saw at my feet something which in fact looks like a snake, I should probably be frightened at it quite directly. It is only a little later that I should make the judgment (true or false) that it is a snake and may sting me. When and only when I have done this I begin to have the experience of fearing it ostensibly in respect of its being venomous and possibly hostile. Here the emotion felt towards an object as such precedes the emotion felt towards it ostensibly in respect of a quality. Now consider the following case. I might at first admire a person ostensibly in respect of certain qualities which I believe him to have. When I come to be familiar with him, either by meeting him often or by constantly reading or hearing about him, I may begin to feel admiration for him directly without thinking of these qualities. Here the emotion felt towards an object ostensibly in respect of qualities precedes the emotion felt towards it as such. The first example involves a process of intellectual analysis and reflexion supervening upon a previously unanalysed and unreflective experience. The second example involves what Hegel would call a "collapse into immediacy" supervening upon a previous state of analysis and reflexion. In view of these facts it seems to me doubtful whether there is any emotion which is *only* felt towards objects as such, and whether there is any emotion which is *only* felt towards objects ostensibly in respect of qualities.

(ii) If and so long as a person or thing is actually in my neighbourhood, my emotions may be affected by qualities of it which I neither know nor believe it to have. Cromwell's emotions towards Charles I may have been affected by qualities of the latter which were quite unrecognised by the former. But, when a person or thing is cogitated only discursively by an experient, it is impossible for that experient's emotions to be affected directly by any qualities which the object may have.



The experient's emotions will be affected directly only by his knowledge or his belief that the object has or had or will have such and such qualities, positive or negative. If the object has or had or will have certain qualities which the experient does not know or believe it to have, these qualities can have no effect on his emotion towards it. If the experient's beliefs about the qualities of the object are false, the effect on his emotions will be just the same as if they had been true. My emotions towards Charles I cannot be affected by any qualities which he may have had that are unknown or unsuspected by me. And they are affected by any beliefs, however mistaken, that I may have about his qualities. If an experient cogitates an object only discursively, the actual qualities of that object can affect the experient's emotions towards it only in the following indirect way. They affect the experient's emotions towards the object just in so far as their possession by the object is a factor in some causal ancestor of the experient's present beliefs about the object.

We can now leave this topic and pass to another part of McTaggart's doctrine of emotion. He says that there are many different species of emotional quality, whilst there is one and only one volitional quality, viz., acquiescence. Again, most emotional qualities can be arranged in pairs of polar opposites, e.g., liking and disliking. But, as we have seen, McTaggart holds that there is no polar opposite to the volitional quality of acquiescence. McTaggart does not attempt to give an exhaustive list of emotions or to decide which are fundamental and which, if any, are derivative. But he thinks that the following list contains all the more important emotions, viz., "liking and repugnance, love and hatred, sympathy and malignancy, approval and disapproval, pride and humility, gladness and sadness, hope and fear, courage and cowardice, anger, wonder, and curiosity" (*Nature of Existence*, §455).

There are two remarks to be made at this point. (i) I have already expressed regret that McTaggart has not distinguished between emotions and emotional moods. I must now call attention to a much more serious defect. He has failed to



distinguish between emotions, emotional dispositions, and sentiments. Courage and cowardice are most certainly not actual emotions. They are dispositions to act and feel in certain ways under certain circumstances. When the disposition of cowardice is excited one does not feel an emotion of "cowardice", but an emotion of fear and a tendency to shun danger or pain in spite of the fact that duty or prudence or a desire to keep one's reputation will be infringed by doing so. A sentiment is a set of emotional dispositions associated with each other through being all associated with the idea of a certain object. Patriotism is an obvious example. When the sentiment is excited a mixed emotion is felt, corresponding to the various emotional dispositions; and the nature of the mixed emotion will vary from time to time according to the circumstances in which the sentiment is excited.

(ii) My next remark is concerned with the relation of emotion to volition. I have already said that I believe volition to be, in respect of its psychical quality, simply one special form of emotion. Even if acquiescence, in McTaggart's sense of the word, had no polar opposite, it might still be an emotional quality like anger which also has no opposite. But I have tried to show that it almost certainly does have a polar opposite.

It will be noticed that McTaggart includes hope and gladness under the head of emotions. Now it seems to me quite obvious that, if wishing is to be included under volition, hoping must be included under it also. And I do not see how McTaggart can possibly maintain his view that there are volitions which are judgments or knowings in their cognitive aspect unless he admits that "being glad that so-and-so is the case" is a volition. For my own part I am very doubtful whether "being glad that so-and-so is the case" is a volition, since this would entail that it differs only cogitatively, and not in respect of its psychical quality, from "wishing that", "hoping that", and "willing that". But, if it is not a volition, there is not the least reason to admit that *any* state of judging or knowing is a volition.

The remaining points to be noticed in McTaggart's general

theory of emotion are the following. (i) We cannot define the class of qualities whose presence in any cogitation makes it an emotion. But we have so many instances of it that there is no difficulty in indicating it to other people. (ii) Any kind of cogitation can be an emotion. This is more obvious than the corresponding proposition about volition. It is easy to produce instances of ostensible judgments or prehensions which are emotions of fear, for instance. Thus anyone who has ever been frightened at a loud sudden noise has had an emotion of fear which was cogitatively a prehension. As we have seen, it is not nearly so easy to produce plausible examples of ostensible judgments or prehensions which are volitions. McTaggart has in fact given no examples, and I have been forced to give examples which he might not have accepted. (iii) One and the same cogitation can be both an emotion and a volition, i.e., it can be qualified both by acquiescence and by some other emotional quality.

## 2. Love and other Emotions dependent on it.

McTaggart's account of the emotion of love may be summarised as follows. (i) It is an emotion of liking which is (a) felt towards persons, and is (b) intense and passionate. He admits that we may talk of loving oysters or justice or our school or our country. But he thinks it obvious that we are talking metaphorically when we speak of loving oysters or justice. He admits that this is not so obvious when we speak of loving our school or our country. But we have the names "loyalty" and "patriotic emotion" for the latter experiences; and it seems reasonable to confine the name "love" to an emotion which is felt towards persons, since this is plainly the commonest and the most literal sense in which it is used.

(ii) Love must not be confused with benevolence. Benevolence is not an emotion, but a desire. To feel benevolently towards a person is to desire that he shall have good experiences and that he shall escape having bad experiences. If *A* loves *B*, he does generally have this desire about *B*. But it is quite common to feel benevolently towards persons whom we do not love. And McTaggart asserts that there are cases

where men have desired to promote the ill-being of those whom they love (*Nature of Existence*, §463).

(iii) Love must not be confused with sympathy. It is true that sympathy is an emotion, for it consists in feeling glad at another person's actual or supposed well-being and in feeling sorry at his actual or supposed ill-being. But, here again, it is quite common to sympathise with people whom we do not love. And McTaggart asserts that there are cases where men have been glad at the ill-being and sorry at the well-being of those whom they love (*Nature of Existence*, §463).

(iv) The fact that love is, by definition, an intense and passionate experience may make us exaggerate the closeness of its relation to sexual desire and emotion. Obviously love is very often closely connected with such experiences. It may be that it is more often connected with them than with any *one* other circumstance. But McTaggart holds that it does occur in connexion with certain other circumstances and in absence of sexual desire and emotion. It may arise in connexion with "kindred, early intimacy, similarity of disposition or opinions, gratitude, and so forth" (*Nature of Existence*, §461). And in some cases it seems to arise in the absence both of sexual desire and of any of these other relationships.

(v) There is no uniform relation between love and pleasure. (a) It is not the case that *A* cannot love *B* unless and until *B*'s existence or his actions have been a source of pleasure to *A*. And even when *B*, whom *A* loves, has been a source of pleasure to *A*, it is often true that *C*, whom *A* does not love, has been a source of much greater pleasure to *A*. (b) Again, it is certainly not true that love, when it has arisen, is always a source of pleasure to the lover. Unrequited love, or love which causes jealousy, is often a source of intense unhappiness to the lover.

(vi) There is hardly any connexion between love and moral approval. It is quite common to love people whom one morally disapproves, and it is even commoner not to love people whom one morally approves. Of course *A*'s love for *B* may happen to be determined by *A*'s approval of *B*'s moral character, just as it may happen to be determined by *A*'s

admiration for the colour of *B*'s hair; but it is obviously much more often determined by factors like the latter than by the former.

(vii) *A* may, in many cases, be determined to love *B* and not *C* by certain qualities which *B* has and *C* lacks. Sometimes we can see for ourselves what these qualities are; and, even when we cannot, there may be such qualities which we have failed to discriminate. But, however *A*'s love for *B* may have been caused, *A* never has the experience of loving *B* ostensibly in respect of qualities. Love towards a person is always felt towards him as such and "as a whole" (*Nature of Existence*, p. 144, footnote 1, and §465). McTaggart holds that there are three characteristics of love which support this contention.

(a) *A*'s love for *B* may be caused by very trivial factors, such as happening to go to the same school or happening to live in adjacent houses in the same town. Yet the emotion may be very intense and very valuable. This, by itself, does not distinguish love from certain other emotions. Patriotism, e.g., may be due to equally trivial and contingent circumstances. The feature which distinguishes love from all other emotions, according to McTaggart, is the following. No one thinks of saying that *A*'s intense love for *B* is unfitting merely because he knows or believes that the cause which originally produced it is trivial. But, when an intense emotion is felt towards an object in respect of a quality which we consider trivial, we are inclined to condemn it as inordinate and unfitting. McTaggart concludes that love "is directed to the person independently of his qualities, and that the determining qualities are not the justification of that emotion, but only the means by which it arises" (*Nature of Existence*, §466).

(b) In cases where we cannot discover the cause of *A*'s love for *B* we do not, for that reason, feel inclined to condemn *A*'s emotion as unfitting and inordinate. But, if *A* intensely admired *B*, and we could see no quality in *B* which seemed to us to make *B* a fitting object of admiration, we should be inclined to condemn *A*'s emotion. When *C* says to *A* "I can't see what you find to admire in *B*" what *C* generally implies is



“Since I can’t see anything in *B* to justify your admiration for him, I have a strong suspicion that the quality in respect of which you admire him is one which does not justify your admiration.” Now, if love is not felt in respect of qualities at all, there can be no ground for thinking that, when we cannot discover the qualities which caused it to be directed on a certain person, it is probably unjustified. Therefore, the fact that we do not feel inclined to condemn love in such cases supports the view that it is not felt in respect of qualities.

(c) Sometimes *A* is caused to love *B* in the first instance by believing him to have a certain quality *q*; and, later on, *A* finds either that he was mistaken and *B* never had this quality, or that *B* has now ceased to have it. Now an emotion which is felt in respect of a quality will generally, though not invariably, cease to be felt if the experient ceases to believe that the object has this quality or begins to believe that the object no longer has the quality. Love very often, though by no means always, survives such changes. But there is another difference which is much more fundamental. If love *fails* to survive such changes, the failure is held to be a matter of reproach to the lover. But our judgment is quite different in the case of an emotion which is felt in respect of a quality. If I admire a person ostensibly in respect of his courage, and go on admiring him when I have discovered that he is really cowardly, I get no bouquets for my constancy. On the contrary, I am blamed for persisting in an emotion which I must now see to be unfitting to its object. Similarly, if I admire a person for the beauty of his hair, I am merely fatuous if I go on admiring him in respect of that quality after he has become grey or bald.

McTaggart holds that, although hatred is the polar opposite of love, it differs from love in these respects. If it is ever justified, it is so only when it is felt ostensibly in respect of qualities, when those qualities really are present in the hated object, and when they are such as to make hatred a fitting emotion to feel towards their possessor.

(viii) There is one and only one condition which is necessary in order that *A* shall love *B*. And this condition is also suffi-



cient. There must be a very close and intimate union between *A* and *B*, and *A* must be aware of this fact. "Qualities and relations can only prevent love by preventing the union or the sense of it, and can only destroy love by destroying the union or the sense of it" (*Nature of Existence*, §468).

(ix) A person's relation to himself is extremely intimate, and he is aware of this intimate relationship. For, according to McTaggart, every self-conscious being prehends himself and is aware that he does so. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that anyone literally *loves* himself. Love is an emotion which can be felt by a person only towards *other* persons.

2.1. *Comments on McTaggart's Account of Love.* The nine propositions stated above constitute McTaggart's account of love. I will now make some critical comments on them.

(i) There is one characteristic of love which is worth mentioning at once, because McTaggart fails to record it. *A* cannot love *B* unless he has actually met *B*. I do not say that he must have *seen* *B*, since blind men can fall in love with persons whom they have never seen. But I think it is certain that one cannot love a person unless one has had ostensible sense-perceptions of his ostensible body or has ostensibly heard him ostensibly talking. The only apparent exception to this rule that I can think of is the so-called "love" of a convinced theist for God. Whether God exists or not I suppose there is no doubt that some people who believe that he exists have experiences which they would describe as emotions of love towards God. And I suppose that *most* of them would not claim to have perceived God; though *some* of them would, no doubt, claim to have had some kind of non-sensuous perception of God. As I have no acquaintance with the experiences in question, I cannot say whether they do or do not constitute an exception to the rule which I have stated. I suspect that "love" is here used in a non-literal sense, and that they do not conflict with the rule.

The importance of this rule is the following. If *A* ostensibly perceives *B*'s ostensible body, and is not dreaming or hallucinated, he is in a position to be affected by that existent (whatever it may really be) which appears to him as *B*'s body.

We may call this *B*'s "organism". *A* may be affected by qualities of it which he neither knows nor believes it to have; and these may play a most important part in causing him to feel love for *B*. Now, if the rule is true, *A* never can begin to love *B* unless he has ostensibly perceived *B*'s body or sounds which ostensibly came from it. Therefore, if the rule is true, *A*'s love for *B* may always have been determined in part at least by qualities of *B*'s organism which *A* neither knows nor believes it to have.

(ii) Let us henceforth confine our attention to the love of one human being for another. Even with this restriction I am very doubtful whether there is one and only one emotion denoted by the word "love" in all its various applications. For consider how extremely varied these applications are. In the first place, there is "love" which is ostensibly sexual and "love" which is ostensibly non-sexual. Then ostensibly sexual "love" may be homosexual or heterosexual; and homosexual "love" may be active or passive, between men or between women, and so on. Again, ostensibly non-sexual "love" includes the "love" of parents for their children, the "love" of children for their parents, the "love" of brothers and sisters, and ostensibly non-sexual "love" between friends of the same or of opposite sexes. Lastly, parental "love" includes the "love" of a mother for her children and the "love" of a father for his children; and filial "love" includes the "love" of children for their mother and the "love" of children for their father.

Now I do not doubt that there is an important and close resemblance between all those experiences which are called "ostensibly sexual love". But I very much doubt whether there is any such resemblance between all the experiences which are called "ostensibly non-sexual love". And I should suppose that there is hardly anything in common between extreme cases of ostensibly sexual "love" and extreme cases of ostensibly non-sexual "love". Taking all the applications of "love" between human beings together, I doubt whether they have much more in common than a "sharp" knife, a "sharp" pain, a "sharp" taste, a "sharp" answer, and a

“sharp” lawyer. Probably they could be arranged in a kind of series, such that one could pass from each term to the next by some resemblance or metaphor; but there is probably almost no *direct* resemblance between the extreme terms of the series.

Of course McTaggart might still be right in holding (a) that there is a certain emotion which *A* will feel towards *B* if and only if *A* knows himself to be united very intimately to *B*; and (b) that the word “love”, in one or other of its many uses, denotes this emotion. There would then remain the practical difficulty of discovering that particular usage of the word “love” in which it denotes the emotion in question. I think that the fairest course is to take two outstanding cases, viz., “love” which quite explicitly involves sexual desire, whether homosexual or heterosexual, and the “love” of a mother for her children. For each is an extreme case, and yet common enough to be familiar to everyone; each would be admitted by McTaggart to be an instance of the emotion which he has in mind; and, by taking two instances, one of which involves sexual desire and does not involve family relationship, and the other of which involves family relationship but not sexual desire, we can avoid giving too much weight to *either* of these factors. There is, of course, one disadvantage in this choice of examples. Most philosophers have been in love and can remember the experience. But, so far as I am aware, Pythagoras is the only philosopher who claimed to have been a mother and to remember the experience. Thus one instance is known by acquaintance and the other only by description or external observation. Still, most philosophers have been the objects of strong maternal affection, whilst it is difficult to believe that many of them have been the objects of any overwhelming sexual desire. So, perhaps, they gain on the swings what they lose on the roundabouts.

(iii) Henceforth, for better or worse, we will confine ourselves to these two instances. The next point is this. The following alternatives are logically possible: (a) That love is a simple emotion, as perhaps fear and anger are. (b) That it is a complex emotion, consisting of several constituents which

also occur isolated or as factors in other complex emotions, and of a single constituent which does not occur in isolation or in other emotions. (c) That it is a complex emotion, *each* constituent of which can occur in isolation or as a factor in other emotions.

It seems to me that the first alternative can be rejected at once. Both sexual love and maternal love are obviously very complex, and it is quite easy to discover in them constituents which occur elsewhere. The real difficulty is to decide between the second and the third alternatives. McTaggart would certainly have rejected the third alternative, and it looks as if he would have accepted the first; but he never explicitly formulates the question.

The following argument might be directed against the third alternative. We may be told that a person does not know "what sexual love is" until he or she has actually been in love with someone, and that a woman does not know "what maternal love is" until she has had a child. Does this not show that there must at least be some unique constituent in the emotion of love? I admit the premises, but I do not accept the argument. Even if the emotion of love involved no constituents which are not experienced in isolation or in other complex emotions, it might be that the particular way in which these constituents are blended in the emotion of love is unique. The following analogy will make my contention clearer. Imagine a person who had never prehended a purple sensum, but had prehended red sensa and blue sensa of various degrees of intensity and saturation. In a sense he would not "know what purple is", though we could convey some idea of it to him by saying that it is a blend of red and blue. Now I take it that "mixed emotions" are blends in somewhat the sense in which purple is a blend of red and blue.

(iv) It is surely obvious that love is not just an actual emotion, however complex, but a constellation of cogitative, conative, and emotional dispositions organised about the idea of a certain person. It is in fact a *sentiment*. *A*'s love for *B* generally lasts for some considerable time, and persists



during periods when *A* is neither perceiving *B* nor thinking of him. On various occasions when this sentiment is excited the actual emotions felt may differ considerably, for sometimes one constituent will be predominant and sometimes another. And, if the sentiment lasts for long, there is generally a progressive change in the character of the emotion which is felt when the sentiment is excited. We will consider this point in rather more detail in reference to sexual and maternal love.

Suppose that *A* is sexually attracted by *B* and falls in love with him. On the cognitive side there will be a tendency to take a special interest in *B* and in everything, however trivial, that concerns him. *A* will find himself constantly thinking of *B*, when *B* is absent; repeating *B*'s name to himself; imagining situations in which he and *B* are concerned; and so on. On the conative side there will be a desire to be with *B* as much as possible, to resent the presence of third persons, and so on. On the emotional side the emotion towards *B* will be predominantly sexual. If now *A* succeeds in seeing a great deal of *B* and acquiring an intimate personal knowledge of him, the sentiment becomes more complex and more highly organised. The most obvious example of this is heterosexual love which leads to marriage and parenthood. I should suppose that, in the later years of a successful marriage, sexual desire becomes a less and less important and a less and less frequent constituent in the complex emotion of love between husband and wife. Yet the emotion, even in its latest phases, would almost certainly be very different from what it is were it not for the reverberations of past sexual desire and past sexual enjoyment. *Pereunt et imputantur*. On the cogitative side the change is no less marked. The thought of *B* no longer occupies *A*'s mind with obsessive force and frequency, and largely delusive imaginations about *B* are replaced by more or less adequate knowledge of his strength and weakness. If we may compare prolonged and successful sexual love for a person to the course of a river from its source to the sea, it begins as a violent torrent in a narrow bed full of rocks and shallows; in its middle reaches it receives many



tributaries; and in its later stages it becomes a calm wide deep stream "strong without force, without o'erflowing full". Too often, of course, there is no such happy ending, and the stream peters out into the shallows of mere habitual toleration or the swamps of mutual irritation and frustration.

The course of maternal love is somewhat similar, but there are very marked differences. A mother who suckles and brings up her own children soon acquires a very complex sentiment about them. But here we have the inconvenience that the children grow up and become independent personalities with interests of their own, whilst the mother is growing older and tending to have fewer external interests. The children inevitably cease to make their mother the centre of their interest and love, whilst the mother's love for them tends to become obsessive. It also tends to be clouded with illusion, because she cannot or will not admit that they have become adults with lives of their own to lead. And the difficulty of mutual understanding between old people and persons in the prime of life is always present and growing. The result is that maternal love is liable to end by being a source of frustration to the mother and a pathetic nuisance to the children. *Sunt lachrymae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.*

The four facts which I have just mentioned seem to me to be the main points which are not enough emphasised in McTaggart's account of love. It remains to say something about certain of the points which he does emphasise.

(v) As regards the connexion or lack of connexion between love and pleasure, I think that McTaggart is in the main right. The only comments that I would make are these. (a) Undoubtedly there are plenty of cases in which love *produces a balance* of unhappiness in the lover. This, however, is compatible with the view that some of the factors in the complex emotion which the lover feels are *always* pleasant, though other factors in it, or certain collateral consequences of it, may be so unpleasant that the total experience is one of great unhappiness. (b) I think that, if *A* loves *B*, his cogitation of *B*'s existence is always toned with pleasure. Here the

pleasure is determined by the love, and not the love by the pleasure. (c) *A*'s knowledge or beliefs about *B*'s actions or feelings may cause so much unhappiness in *A* that the pleasure which *A* takes in cogitating *B*'s existence is completely outweighed. (d) This unhappiness, which *A* feels in cogitating *B*'s real or imagined actions and feelings, may depend on the fact that *A* loves *B*. If he were indifferent to *B* or hated him, the very same cogitations about *B*'s feelings or actions might be hedonically neutral or positively pleasant.

(vi) The assertion that *A* loves *B* always as such and "as a whole", so far as it is true, is closely connected with the fact that love is a highly complex emotion which is the manifestation of a sentiment that is constantly growing and altering. In the case of maternal love, at its earlier stages, it is not strictly true. Maternal love is felt by a woman towards certain persons, and not towards others, in respect of the relational property of being *her children*; though it may be true that she loves all the persons who have this relational property regardless of what pure qualities they may have. Sexual love does not depend on any such relational property. Presumably it is determined by a whole complicated pattern of physical and mental qualities in the beloved, which the lover would generally be quite unable to distinguish and name; and these must harmonise with a complex of innate and acquired dispositions in the lover, which he also knows little or nothing about. In either case the emotion, as it is felt at later stages, is determined, in the main, not by the present qualities of the beloved, but by the traces of innumerable actions and experiences in common, most of which can no longer be remembered as separate events.

(vii) Let us next consider the contrast which McTaggart claims to find between the judgments of praise or blame which we pass on love and those which we pass in like circumstances on other emotions.

(a) McTaggart conveys the impression that love is *never* condemned. If this is what he thought, he was certainly mistaken. There is no doubt that we sometimes condemn love as inordinate or misplaced. We talk of "blind" and "doting"

affection; we describe certain men as "uxorious"; and we certainly do not use these expressions as compliments. A degree of passion which we think appropriate enough between young people when they first fall in love with each other, and which we regard with a smile or a sigh, would generally be condemned as unfitting if it persisted into the later stages of their love, and would generally be considered ridiculous or disgusting in the case of two elderly people.

(b) The evaluating judgments which we make about sentiments depend on several different and independently variable factors. Some of these may influence us in one direction and some in another when we make our evaluation. Suppose that *A* has formed a certain sentiment about *B*. In evaluating it we have to raise the following questions. ( $\alpha$ ) Are the qualities of *B* and the relations between him and *A* such that the emotion corresponding to this sentiment is a fitting one for *A* to feel towards *B*? ( $\beta$ ) Is the sentiment in this particular case likely on the whole to lead to good actions and experiences in *A* and to benefit *B* and others? ( $\gamma$ ) Are sentiments of this kind *generally* beneficial to the person who has them, to the persons about whom they are formed, and to society at large? ( $\delta$ ) Is the existence of this sentiment in *A* about *B* a favourable sign of *A*'s intellectual and moral character and dispositions?

(c) We start with the fact that love is a *sentiment*, not a mere passing emotion, and that it has very little value or disvalue unless and until it becomes a fairly persistent and complex sentiment. It is obviously a matter of hardly any importance to the value of such a sentiment whether the qualities in the object, or the relations between the object and the subject, which were cause-factors in initiating it, were trivial or dignified, fleeting or persistent, real or imaginary. In the first place, they were anyhow only factors in a much more complex total cause, which included beside them the qualities, dispositions, and internal organisation of the subject. Secondly, the value or disvalue of the sentiment stands or falls by its total history and not by its initial phases taken in isolation. Now its subsequent development depends

upon all kinds of factors in the object, in the subject, and in the circumstances in which they are placed.

Suppose now that *B*, whom *A* has been loving, suffers some terrible bodily disfigurement or becomes a madman or an habitual drunkard. If *A* is *B*'s mother, we are inclined to think that her love for *B* ought to persist, since the relation of mother to child still persists and maternal love is in respect of this relationship. Perhaps it would be fair to say that we praise her if it does persist, and do not blame her very severely if it fails to do so provided she continues to treat *B* kindly. In the case of sexual love, I think that we react differently according as the change in *B* takes place early or late in the course of *A*'s love for him. In the first place, I should say that we think it definitely unfitting for *A* to *fall in love with B* if *B* is *already* known to *A* as hideously deformed or mad or an habitual drunkard. Again, if the change in *B* takes place not very long after *A* has fallen in love with him, I should say that we blame *A* little, if at all, for falling out of love with him in consequence of the change. We recognise, of course, that, if *A* ceases to love *B*, this will entail a further misfortune on *B* in addition to his disfigurement or his madness. This imposes on *A* very special and extremely difficult duties of tact and consideration for *B*. But I do not see that it makes *A* blameworthy if he falls out of love with *B*. Lastly, suppose that the change in *B* takes place after *A* has loved him for a considerable time, e.g., after some years of happy married life. Then, I think, we are inclined to blame *A* somewhat if his love for *B* fails to withstand the shock. We are inclined to think that, if *A*'s sentiment for *B* had been worth much, it would by this time have become so complex and rooted and so largely dependent on innumerable past experiences and actions shared with *B* that it would have survived the change in *B*.

(viii) I am not at all satisfied with McTaggart's statement that *A* will love *B* if and only if he is and knows himself to be united in a specially close and intimate way with *B*. Undoubtedly this is true of the love of a mother for her children. She *is* related to them in a perfectly unique way; she *knows*



that she is; and it is in respect of this relationship that she feels towards them a love which she does not feel towards other children. But is it true of sexual love? It is admitted that *A* may be passionately in love with *B*, when *B* is perfectly indifferent or hostile to *A*. Is *A* united to *B* in a specially close and intimate way, in such cases? And, if he is, does he *know* himself to be? If you say that the fact that *A* loves *B* is *itself* a specially close and intimate relationship of *A* to *B*, the answer is no doubt in the affirmative. But, if this is all that is meant, it is irrelevant. For McTaggart is talking, not of love itself, but of a condition which is necessary and sufficient to make *A* love *B*. When this irrelevancy is cleared away I cannot see any empirical ground for McTaggart's assertion. All that I am prepared to admit is the following. If sexual love for *B* arises in *A*, it gives rise to a desire in *A* to be with *B* as much as possible. If *B* returns his love there will be a corresponding desire in *B*. The result will, in general, be that *A* and *B* will be together more often than would otherwise be the case. And each will take a special interest in all that concerns the other. In such circumstances it is inevitable that a very close relationship will arise between them, and this in turn will contribute to build up the sentiment of love in each for the other.

2.2. *Emotions dependent on Love*. McTaggart holds that there are two emotions which tend to be present in any person who loves, and which depend on his love. He calls them "Complacency" and "Self-reverence".

If *A* loves *B*, he will contemplate any state of *B*, or any event in *B*'s history, with a special liking in so far as he knows or believes it to belong to *B*. This liking in a lover for certain experiences and states in respect of their belonging to his beloved is what McTaggart calls "Complacency". In those stages which appear, *sub specie temporis*, to come before the end of time this emotion is often checked and even neutralised by repugnance or moral disapproval felt in respect of other characteristics of the states of the beloved.

I think that there is no doubt that McTaggart is right in recognising some such emotion as this, though the name



which he gives to it seems a very odd one. It is perfectly certain that, if *A* loves *B*, he takes an affectionate interest in everything about *B*. And it is certain that, in sexual and maternal love, this special affectionate interest makes the lover contemplate with toleration or positive pleasure events connected with the beloved which he would view with disgust in connexion with anyone whom he did not love. In the case of sexual love I think that this is closely bound up with the desire which *A* feels for a *special* intimate union with *B*. This desire is most obviously fulfilled if *A* shares with *B* actions or experiences which modesty and decency have made typically private and personal.

McTaggart's account of the emotion which he calls "Self-reverence" is as follows. If *A* loves *B*, he has supreme value, since love is the highest good and he possesses it. If *A* is self-conscious he will be aware of himself as having this supreme value. In respect of this he will contemplate himself with reverence. And he will contemplate his own experiences with a feeling of complacency analogous to that which he feels in cogitating the states of people whom he loves (*Nature of Existence*, §477).

I regard this doctrine of McTaggart's as extremely far-fetched. In the first place, the emotion would not be felt unless *A* *believed* that love is the supreme good. Now, even if in fact it be so (and this is quite uncertain), it is obvious that many people have loved others without believing love to be the supreme good. I should have thought it fairly certain that people have loved others and loathed themselves in respect of doing so because they felt that they were the victims of an obsessive passion for an unworthy object. To this McTaggart might answer that, in those stages which appear *sub specie temporis* to come before the end of time, the tendency for lovers to feel self-reverence in respect of their love may be checked or neutralised, just as their tendency to feel complacency towards all the states of those whom they love may be checked, by the repugnance which some of these states excite in respect of their other characteristics. (See *Nature of Existence*, p. 164, footnote.)

Again, even if love be the supremely valuable experience and *A* loves *B*, there is an ambiguity in the conclusion that *A* "has supreme value". It might mean that *A* owns an experience or a disposition which is supremely valuable. When interpreted in this sense it does follow from the premises but is no ground for *A* to reverence himself. If *A* owns an experience which is supremely valuable, this may be a legitimate ground for self-congratulation on his part. He would be justified in feeling that kind of emotion which one would express by exclaiming "What a *lucky* fellow I am!" And this, I think, is the kind of exclamation which a person who is in love is inclined to make about himself. But it is not a legitimate ground for self-reverence. A person who said, with little Jack Horner, "What a *good boy* am I!" merely because he happened to own a supremely valuable experience, would have no better justification than his celebrated prototype. On the other hand, the conclusion might mean that *A* is a supremely valuable self. When it is interpreted in this sense it would, no doubt, justify *A* in feeling self-reverence. But, taken in this sense, it obviously does not follow from the premises.

Lastly, I am extremely doubtful whether a lover feels any special emotion towards his own experiences simply in respect of their being the experiences of a person who is in love. Everyone feels a very special emotion towards his own actual and possible experiences simply in respect of their being *his*. But this is independent of whether he loves any one or not. And I am altogether sceptical about there being any characteristic change in a person's emotional attitude towards his own experiences due to their being now the experiences of himself *as loving*.

2.3. *Concluding Remarks on this Topic.* I have devoted to the subject of love an amount of space which some readers may think inordinate. I have done this deliberately for the following reasons. (i) As we shall see in due course, it plays a fundamental part in McTaggart's system. He thinks that he can prove that this emotion must occur in that stage which appears *sub specie temporis* as coming at the end of time and

never ceasing, i.e., what popular religion calls "Heaven". And he does not profess to be able to prove this about any other emotion except love and the emotions of complacency and self-reverence which depend on it. Now his argument depends on certain alleged psychological facts about love, which we have examined in the present section.

(ii) McTaggart felt very strongly and wrote very eloquently about love. Now there are few writers who are less open than he to the charge of hitting their readers below the intellect; but, in this one case, I suspect that he does so, though of course without intention. If I am right in this suspicion, it may be presumed that the effect on his readers of this one breach of the rules on the part of so scrupulous a writer will be staggering. I think that I have noticed this effect in some of McTaggart's critics and in myself. They seem to have been content, at this point, to "wonder with a foolish face of praise"; and I have felt, in writing this section, rather as if I were one of the Protestant underworld brawling in a high church during a celebration of the mass. To speak plainly, love is, in some respects, so sublime, and, in others, so ridiculous, and the two aspects are so closely intertwined, that it is not easy to keep a just mean between cheap cynicism and muddled mysticism. I think that McTaggart, for once, approached dangerously near the latter extreme; and, if I have managed to avoid the former, I may have done so only by confining myself to the prosaic paths of platitude and banality.

(iii) However this may be, I wish to state in conclusion the following personal opinion for what it is worth. I believe that love, in the only sense in which McTaggart's remarks have any application to it, is essentially bound up, so far as our experience goes, with homosexual or heterosexual desire, or with maternity as it manifests itself in birds and the higher mammals. I have, indeed, admitted and asserted that it developes from one or other of these seeds into an extremely complex sentiment, which may eventually bear almost as little likeness to its earlier phases as an oak does to an acorn. Nevertheless, I find it impossible to conceive love in complete isolation from these earlier instinctive phases which are

rooted in sex, reproduction, gestation, nutrition, and family life. Nature, who seldom fails to puncture the pretensions of her snobbish children, locally associates the bodily conditions of sexual and maternal love with the most homely and the least romantic incidents of our mortality. And I suspect that the notion of love as a possible emotional relationship between one timeless disembodied spirit and another is the product of an abstraction as vicious as it is violent.

### 3. Pleasure and Pain.

McTaggart states his views about the nature of pleasures and pains in §481 of *The Nature of Existence*. Pleasures and pains, like volitions and emotions, are all of them cogitations. There is a certain determinable quality which belongs to some cogitations and to nothing else; this may be called "hedonic tone". It has two polar-opposite determinates under it, viz., pleasantness and unpleasantness. A cogitation which is qualified by pleasantness is called "a pleasure"; and a cogitation which is qualified by unpleasantness is called "a feeling of unpleasure" or "a pain". The cogitations which are most often and most strongly qualified in this way are prehensions of certain ostensible sensa. But other kinds of cogitation can also be pleasures or pains, e.g., a pleasant anticipation or a painful memory. McTaggart refuses to count hedonic tone as an emotional quality. He regards it as a third kind of psychical characteristic, parallel to the volitional quality and the various emotional qualities, which may belong to a cogitation and cannot belong to anything else.

In stating McTaggart's doctrine I have tacitly made certain minor corrections and modifications. He does not distinguish between unpleasantness and painfulness, as most contemporary psychologists do; and he does not use the phrase "hedonic tone" for the determinable under which pleasantness and unpleasantness are polar-opposite determinates.

My own view about unpleasures and pains is the following. All pains are experiences which have the quality of unpleasantness in a high degree; but not all experiences which are highly unpleasant are pains. Thus, the experiences of smelling sul-



phuretted hydrogen or tasting castor-oil are extremely unpleasant to most people, but they are not counted as pains. There are certain qualities which are sensibly manifested mainly in intra-somatic sensation, e.g., throbbingness, burningness, stabbingness, etc. For most people these qualities are strongly unpleasant-making even when they are manifested with only slight intensity. What we call "a pain" is an unpleasant experience which owes its unpleasantness to the fact that in it one of these qualities is sensibly manifested.

At this point the question naturally arises: "Is there any distinction among pleasant experiences to correspond to the distinction between pains and non-pains among unpleasant experiences?" I think that there is, though we have no popular name for it. I suggest that the quality which is sensibly manifested in those experiences which arise through stimulation of the sexual organs stands out from other sensible qualities in respect of pleasantness, as throbbingness, burningness, etc., stand out in respect of unpleasantness. Pleasant experiences which owe their pleasantness to the fact that this quality is manifested in them may be called "orgiastic". I suggest, then, that pleasant experiences may be divided into an orgiastic and a non-orgiastic sub-class, just as unpleasant experiences can be divided into a painful and a non-painful sub-class. And I suggest that the orgiastic kind of pleasant experience corresponds to the painful kind of unpleasant experience.

It is easy to see why there is a popular name for painful experiences and no popular name for the corresponding sub-class of pleasant experiences. Almost any stimulation of almost any part of the body will give rise to painful sensations if it surpasses a certain optimum intensity. But in normal people at most times orgiastic sensations can be produced only by a certain kind of stimulation of a very restricted area of the body. It is natural that there should be a popular name for the extensive and frequently experienced sub-class of pains, and that there should be no popular name for the restricted and seldom experienced sub-class of orgiastic pleasures.



I think that the proposed theory gains some support from the well-known fact that stimuli which would normally produce painful sensations will produce in certain people at certain times experiences which are orgiastic pleasures. In such cases there are two possible explanations. (i) That the subject is *physiologically* abnormal; i.e., that stimuli which would normally produce a manifestation of one of the pain-qualities produce in him a sensation which manifests the orgiastic sensible quality. If he is *hedonically* normal, this experience will be for him an orgiastic pleasure. (ii) That the subject is physiologically normal, but hedonically abnormal. On this hypothesis the stimuli do produce in him, as in others, sensations which manifest one of the pain-qualities. But, owing to his hedonic abnormality, such experiences are for him highly pleasant. On either alternative the facts show that there is a somewhat close connexion between pains and orgiastic pleasures.

#### 4. McTaggart's Classification of Experiences.

We have now considered in some detail McTaggart's psychological analysis of the various kinds of experience. It remains to point out one peculiarity of McTaggart's psychology, which might be overlooked if it were not explicitly mentioned. It is this. According to McTaggart mere straightforward introspection and psychological reflection upon its findings suffice to show that *all* experiences, whatever else they may be, are primarily and fundamentally *cogitations*. They are all ostensible prehensions, or ostensible judgments, or ostensible supposings, or ostensible imagings, or some combination of these. He has not denied, and he does not deny in the later parts of his work, that there are volitions, emotions, and feelings of pleasure and unpleasure. But he asserts that they are all cogitations characterised by certain additional psychic qualities. Now this is a very important and interesting contention, which must neither be allowed to go by default nor be admitted by inadvertence.

I am quite convinced that McTaggart's account of volition, emotion, and pleasure-pain is enormously superior to the in-

coherencies of the ordinary psychologists with their "Tripartite Division". On the other hand, it does not seem to me plausible to hold that all experiences are cogitations; and McTaggart has never explicitly discussed this doctrine as a general psychological proposition. I would therefore propose the following amendment. *Prima facie* there are two and only two fundamentally different kinds of experiences, viz., those which do and those which do not have "epistemological objects". The former are all cogitations, of one kind or another. The latter are feelings. In language the distinction is expressed in the following way. We say *what* we are cogitating, and we say *how* we are feeling. If we describe the term "sensation" psycho-physiologically as an experience due to the stimulation of the outer end of an afferent nerve, it would seem that some sensations are cogitations, viz., prehensions of sensibilia, whilst others are feelings.

Now the volitional quality attaches mainly, if not exclusively, to cogitations; and the cogitations to which it attaches are *eo ipso* volitions. If this quality ever attaches to feelings, the feeling thus qualified is a volitional mood. The various emotional qualities can qualify both cogitations and feelings. A cogitation qualified by a certain emotional quality is a certain emotion; a feeling qualified by the same emotional quality is the corresponding emotional mood. Lastly, hedonic tone attaches mainly to feelings and to certain sensations which it is more plausible to classify as feelings than as prehensions of sensibilia. On the other hand, it undoubtedly does attach also to certain cogitations; more especially when these cogitations are also volitions or emotions. Thus the experience of cogitating something fearfully is generally highly unpleasant; the experience of confident expectation qualified by the desire quality is generally highly pleasant; and so on.

## CHAPTER XXX

### OSTENSIBLE SELFHOOD AND OSTENSIBLE SELF-KNOWLEDGE

In Chap. xxxvi of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart develops his theory of the nature of selves and of self-knowledge, independently of his special principles of Endless Divisibility, Determining Correspondence, and the Unreality of Time. Essentially the same doctrine is put forward in the essay on *Personality*, which can now be read conveniently in the volume of McTaggart's *Philosophical Studies* collected and published since his death by Dr Keeling.

#### 1. Spirituality.

McTaggart begins by defining the notion of "spirituality". To say that  $x$  is "spiritual" means that  $x$  "has content, all of which is the content of one or more selves". This means that  $x$  is either a self; or a part of a self; or a group, every member of which is either a self or a part of a self. In order to understand this definition we must remember that McTaggart counts the experiences of a self as *parts* of it. The question then arises: "Can selfhood, i.e., the characteristic of being a self, be further analysed?" The rest of the theory is concerned mainly with this question and with certain others which are closely connected with it.

Before passing to these questions we must consider McTaggart's important doctrine that nothing which is spiritual could also have spatial characteristics, such as shape, size, and position. He asserts this to be self-evident in Chap. xxxviii, §430, of *The Nature of Existence*. If a self or an experience or a group whose members are selves or experiences or both were also spatial, it would have to have some definite position. And, if it were extended, it would have to have some definite shape and size. Now, McTaggart

says, it is plainly nonsensical to assert of a mind or an experience or a group composed of minds or experiences that it is, e.g., globular in shape, six inches in diameter, and five feet to the north-east of another mind or experience or group of minds or experiences. It will be worth while to quote the actual passage, which brings out the point extremely well. "The more I try to accept as possible a self which is globular, the more I find that I slip away to one of two other ideas—the idea of two closely connected substances, of which one is a self and one is globular, and the idea of a substance which really is a self and is misperceived as being globular." Obviously, similar remarks would apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the attempt to think of a globular experience or a cubical group of minds or experiences or both.

In the footnote to p. 117 McTaggart tries to rub in the absurdity of such suggestions by considering the adventures of an Arctic explorer, a polar bear, and an Esquimaux. He asks us to imagine that the bear eats the explorer's brain and that the bear's brain is afterwards eaten by the Esquimaux. Now, suppose we hold that one and the same substance counts as a *brain*, in respect of its *material* characteristics, and as a *mind*, in respect of its *mental* characteristics. Then, McTaggart asserts, it will follow that "the same substance is at first part of the mind of the explorer, then part of the mind of the bear, and finally part of the mind of the Esquimaux". This, he says, can be rejected as ridiculous; for it is "sufficiently obvious that anything which is ever part of one mind can never become part of another mind, or exist without being part of a mind at all".

I am inclined to think that the difficulties and absurdities which McTaggart points out are primarily linguistic. No doubt it sounds absurd to say: "This movement of particles in my brain is a pleasantly toned belief that Bacon wrote *Hamlet*"; and it sounds equally absurd to say: "This experience of mine is a rhythmic circular movement of a particle in my brain, with an angular velocity of two and a half radians per second and a radius of one eighth of a centimetre." The primary cause of the absurdity is this. The subject of the



sentence in the first example is presented for consideration under purely spatial and kinematic determinables. We therefore expect as a predicate some determinate specification of these determinables. Thus we expect some such continuation as "This movement of particles in my brain is circular, rapid, of small radius, and so on." Instead of this we are supplied with a determinate specification of a purely mental determinable, which was never mentioned nor implied in the subject of the sentence. In the second example the exact opposite of this happens. The subject of the sentence is presented for consideration under purely mental determinables. We expect as a predicate some determinate specification of these. Thus we expect some such continuation as "This experience of mine is a longing expectation of having tea in about half-an-hour." Instead of this we are supplied with a determinate specification of purely spatial and kinematic determinables, which were never mentioned or implied in the subject of the sentence. The oddity is much the same as that which we should notice if we were to read in a review in *Mind* the statement: "Mr Jones's proof of the existence of God is oblong in shape and about eighteen square inches in area." We should not be so much surprised by this if we met it in the pages of a journal devoted to typography; but, in one devoted to philosophy, we think of an argument as something which is valid or invalid, clumsy or elegant, and so on. We expect some such continuation as: "Mr Jones's proof of the existence of God is ingenious and less obviously fallacious than most arguments on this topic."

It is plain that the real question at issue is not fairly stated unless we start with some subject-word, such as "event" or "process", which is not conventionally mental or material in its connotation, but is neutral in these respects. The sort of statement which we have to consider will then be the following. "This event or process is both an experience and a state of motion. In respect of the former determinable it is a pleasantly toned belief that Bacon wrote *Hamlet*. In respect of the latter determinable it is a rhythmic circular motion of a particle in a certain brain, with an angular velocity of two and a half



radians per second and a radius of one eighth of a centimetre." I think it is evident that there is no *verbal* absurdity in this statement, as there is in the statements which McTaggart tries to foist on the theory which he wishes to refute.

The story of the explorer, the bear, and the Esquimaux must now be restated on somewhat similar lines. It is evident that McTaggart tacitly assumes the following general principle. "If  $X$ 's brain and  $X$ 's mind are one and the same continuant  $C$ , then anything which is part of  $X$ 's brain is *ipso facto* a part of  $X$ 's mind." This seems plausible at first sight, but it will not bear closer inspection.

What would be meant, in terms of the theory under discussion, by saying that  $P$  is a part of  $X$ 's brain? It would mean that  $P$ , in respect of its material characteristics, is related to  $C$ , in respect of *its* material characteristics, as part is to whole. Now we know what this means. It means that  $C$ , in respect of its material characteristics, is a complex spatial, mechanical, physico-chemical, and physiological system, and that  $P$  is spatially, mechanically, physico-chemically, and physiologically, a constituent of this system. What would be meant, in terms of the theory under discussion, by saying that  $P$  is a part of  $X$ 's mind? It would mean that  $P$ , in respect of its mental characteristics, is related to  $C$ , in respect of *its* mental characteristics, as part is to whole. Now there are several things to be said about this. (i) It quite obviously does not follow from the proposition that  $P$ , in respect of its *material* characteristics, is related to  $C$ , in respect of *its material* characteristics, as part is to whole. (ii) It is quite possible that  $P$  has *only* material characteristics, although the more complex continuant  $C$  has *both* material and mental characteristics. In that case there could be no relations whatever between  $P$  and  $C$  in respect of mental characteristics, though there would still be the relation of part to whole between them in respect of material characteristics. (iii) I very much doubt whether we have any clear idea of what we mean when we talk of a mind as "having parts". Of course McTaggart counts the experiences which a mind owns as parts of it. But most people would not be willing to admit

that the relation of ownership is an instance of the relation of whole to part; and, in any case, this is not relevant for the present purpose, since we are here concerned with the relation of a complex *continuant* to its *sub-continuants* and not with its relation to its *occurents*. Therefore, even if *P* has mental as well as material characteristics, it is doubtful whether any meaning can be attached to the statement that *P* would be a part of *X*'s mind.

I think it is evident, then, that there is no reason to accept the general principle that, if *X*'s brain and *X*'s mind are one and the same continuant, anything which is part of *X*'s brain must be part of *X*'s mind. And, unless we accept this principle, we need not admit McTaggart's conclusion that the same substance is at first part of the mind of the explorer, then part of the mind of the bear, and finally part of the mind of the Esquimaux. The proper way of stating the case is as follows. There were three highly complex continuants,  $C_X$ ,  $C_Y$ , and  $C_Z$ , each of which had both material and mental characteristics. In respect of the former  $C_X$  was *X*'s brain,  $C_Y$  was *Y*'s brain, and  $C_Z$  was *Z*'s brain. In respect of the latter  $C_X$  was *X*'s mind,  $C_Y$  was *Y*'s mind, and  $C_Z$  was *Z*'s mind. There was a certain simpler continuant *P*, which certainly had material characteristics and may or may not have had mental ones. In respect of their material characteristics  $C_X$ ,  $C_Y$ , and  $C_Z$  were wholes in which *P* was successively a part in respect of *its* material characteristics. But there is no reason to suppose that *P* was successively a part of  $C_X$ ,  $C_Y$ , and  $C_Z$  in respect of the *mental* characteristics of them and of it. For it is quite uncertain whether *P* has any mental characteristics; there is nothing in the theory under discussion to prevent it being a *purely* material continuant. And, even if *P* had mental as well as material characteristics, it is quite uncertain whether two continuants can significantly be said to stand to each other in the relation of whole and part in respect of their *mental* characteristics.

I conclude, then, that the examples by which McTaggart tries to convince his readers of the absurdity of supposing that one and the same particular could be both material and

spiritual are really irrelevant. They would be effective enough for bamboozling a jury or raising a laugh at a political meeting, but they have no other importance. But, when we have extinguished these forensic fireworks, two perfectly genuine questions remain to be faced. (i) On reflexion does one, or does one not, see an incompatibility between the two characteristics of spatiality and spirituality? Is it, or is it not, evident on reflexion that no particular could possibly have both of them? (ii) Even if one does not see a positive incompatibility between them, has one any clear idea in one's mind when one suggests that a certain particular may be *both* a circular motion of a particle and an experience of longingly expecting tea? In saying such things is one not, perhaps, talking without thinking?

To the first question my own answer is in the negative. Characteristics which I can see to be incompatible with each other seem always to be determinates under a common determinable or to be positively connected in some other intimate way. Now spirituality and spatiality seem to be two supreme determinables which are logically quite disconnected. There is less positive connexion between them than there is, e.g., between colour and sound-quality; for these are at least both species under the genus "sensible quality". Incompatibility between two such characteristics seems like the proverbial conflict between a whale and an elephant.

But this very circumstance makes it difficult to answer the second question affirmatively. (a) It is certain that one never *prehends* any particular *as* both spatial and spiritual. Particulars which are prehended as spatial are prehended as having colour or temperature, but never as being selves or experiences. Particulars which are prehended as experiences are prehended as desires, emotions, cogitations, etc., but never as having shape, position, or extension. If selves are prehended at all, they are certainly not prehended as having spatial characteristics. (b) It might, perhaps, be said that we never, strictly speaking, *prehend* one and the same particular as coloured and as having temperature; and yet we have no difficulty in understanding the statement that one and the same body is

both red and hot. Assuming this to be true, we may answer as follows. The particulars which we prehend as coloured are prehendend as having shape, extension, and position; and the colour is prehendend as spread over a certain area. Similar remarks apply to the particulars which we prehend as having temperature. We can thus form the idea of an area which has *both* redness and hotness spread over it, even if we have never prehendend any one particular as both red and hot. Or, again, we can form the idea of a solid, which has redness spread over its surface and hotness diffused throughout its volume. There is no analogy to this in the case of spatiality and spirituality. As we have just seen, spatiality forms the connecting link between colour and temperature, because colour and temperature are both "extensible qualities" and are given as such in sensation. But the difficulty with spirituality and spatiality just is that the former is *not* given as an extensible quality in introspection. (c) It might be said that such characteristics as sound-quality and smell-quality are not presented to us in sensation as spread out over definite areas or diffused through definite volumes; and yet we talk of a particular as being at once globular, red, warm, and having a certain smell-quality. E.g., this might be said of a peach just taken from a sunny wall. But in this case I suspect that we are not ascribing the smell-quality to the particular in the literal sense in which we are ascribing the colour, the shape, and the temperature to it. I suspect that we mean that the volume which is marked out by the latter qualities has the *causal* characteristic of *emitting* a certain kind of smell. I do not see that we could possibly attach any similar meaning to the statement that a certain particular was both globular and an emotion of fear.

The upshot of this discussion is as follows. If it be asserted to be inconceivable that one and the same particular should be both spatial and spiritual, I disagree on one interpretation and I agree on another. I disagree, if it means that the two characteristics can be seen to be positively incompatible. But I agree, if it means that we have no clear idea of what we are suggesting or asserting when we say that one and the same



particular might have both these characteristics. I assume that McTaggart would have held that the suggestion is inconceivable in the first and stronger sense, and not merely in the second and weaker sense.

## 2. Selfhood and Selves.

As we have seen, McTaggart defines "spirituality" in terms of selfhood. We will first collect the main propositions which McTaggart asserts about selfhood and selves, confining ourselves to those which are independent of his special principles of Endless Divisibility, Determining Correspondence, and the Unreality of Time.

2.1. *McTaggart's Doctrine of the Self.* (i) It can be truly and significantly said of any self that it "has experiences". This cannot be significantly said of anything but a self.

(ii) Every experience which a self has is a part of that self. McTaggart discusses this principle most fully in Chap. xxxvii, §412, of *The Nature of Existence*. It is true that he is concerned there primarily with prehensions. But, as we have seen, he claims to show by ordinary introspection and psychological reflexion that all experiences are cogitations. And, as we shall see in due course, he claims to show by the special principles of his system that all cogitations must be prehensions.

In Chap. xxvi, Sub-section 1.2, p. 38, of the present work I have discussed the doctrine that prehensions are part of the self which prehends, and McTaggart's reasons for holding it. The reasons seemed to me inconclusive. I will now add some remarks about the general doctrine that the experiences which a self "has" are parts of it.

At the beginning of §412 of *The Nature of Existence*, where McTaggart first raises the question whether the prehensions which a self has are parts of it, he makes the following statement. "The natural view, that which would be adopted by most people, if not by all, on first being asked the question, is, I think, that they *are* parts of it." He says that the only fact that might seem to cast doubt on this immediate affirmative answer is that prehension involves a relation between



the prehending self and the prehended particular. So I conclude that McTaggart would hold that most people, if asked, would be inclined to say that *any* experience which a self owns is a part of that self.

Now this seems to me a most surprising statement. As I remarked in discussing the subject in Sub-section 1.2 of Chap. XXVI, most people would distinguish between a self, which *has* a history, and the history of a self. They would have no hesitation in saying that all the experiences which a self has are parts of (or phases in) *its history*; but they would surely hesitate to say that these experiences are parts of *it*. I think that we must affirm, as against McTaggart, that *sub specie temporis* a self is a continuant and its experiences are occurrents in that continuant; and that the occurrent-continuant relation or tie is *prima facie* not a species of the part-whole relation or tie.

Of course McTaggart holds that nothing is really temporal. Since the occurrent-continuant relation essentially involves temporality, it follows that a self cannot, on his view, really be a continuant, and that a self's experiences cannot really be occurrents. And McTaggart does in fact hold that what appear *sub specie temporis* to be occurrents in a continuant are really a certain kind of parts of a certain kind of whole. We are not concerned with this doctrine at present. The criticism to be made here and now is the following. McTaggart evidently thought that the proposition that the experiences of a self are parts of it could be established *independently* of his denial of the reality of time. He thought that, even if a self really were a continuant and its experiences really were occurrents in it, it would still be certain that the experiences of a self are parts of it. For he asserts and tries to establish this principle in Book V of *The Nature of Existence*, and he does not develop his positive theory of the timeless reality which is misprehended as a series of successive events until Books VI and VII. Now I maintain that *prima facie* the experiences of a self are parts of its history, and, for that very reason, are *prima facie* not parts of itself. McTaggart never seriously faces this fact. No doubt several different analyses

of it are conceivable, and on some analyses of it the occurrent-continuant relation will be replaced by the part-whole relation. E.g., some philosophers would hold that the statement "The experience *e* belongs to the self *S*" is equivalent to some such statement as "There is a certain series of experiences inter-related in a certain characteristic way, and *e* is a term (or a part of a term) of this series." But this kind of analysis looks very much like the "bundle" theory, which McTaggart rejects.

(iii) We have seen that McTaggart holds that all the experiences of a self are parts of it. Does he hold also that all the parts of a self are experiences of it? In § 412, p. 93, of *The Nature of Existence* he says: "... we feel, when we contemplate our cogitations, volitions, and emotions, that, taken together, they do in some sense exhaust the self, so that it is completely comprised in them." He uses this as an argument to support the principle that the experiences of a self are parts of it. I have dealt with this statement, in the latter connexion, in Sub-section 1.2 of Chap. xxvi of the present work. We must now consider it in connexion with the question whether *all* the parts of a self are experiences of it.

We must remember here McTaggart's notion of a "set of parts", i.e., a group of particulars which together just make up another particular, without excess or defect or overlapping. I think that McTaggart's doctrine is that every self has a *set of parts*, in this technical sense, *each of which* is an experience of that self. This is quite compatible with the self having parts which are not experiences. Thus, e.g., England has a set of parts each of which is a county of England. But it has plenty of parts which are not counties, e.g., the diocese of Bath and Wells. When we come to consider the parts of McTaggart's system which depend on his special metaphysical principles, we shall be able to amplify this doctrine as follows. Every self has, in a certain dimension, a set of parts each of which is a perfectly correct prehension. All these experiences appear, *sub specie temporis*, as "beginning at the end of time, and never ceasing". Every self has also, in a certain other dimension, a timeless series of parts each of which (except

one of the two end-terms of the series) is a partly erroneous prehension. These experiences appear, *sub specie temporis*, as a series of events in the history of the self. The terms in such a series *do not* form a set of parts of the self; for they *overlap* each other. And the residue which, together with any one of these experiences, would just make up the whole self is a *part* of the self but is not one of its *experiences*.

It is clear then that McTaggart holds (a) that every self has a set of parts, each of which is one of its experiences; but (b) that every self also has parts which are not experiences. And it is evident from the statement which I have quoted from §412, p. 93 that he thought that the first of these propositions could be established by ordinary introspection and psychological reflexion, apart from his special metaphysical principles. I will now make some comments on this contention.

(a) It is unfortunate that, if McTaggart's metaphysical conclusions are true, his introspection on this subject must have been misleading. His introspection told him that the cogitations, emotions, and volitions which he contemplated, together with others like them, were a set of parts of his self. Now all such experiences were particulars which appeared *sub specie temporis* as events occurring *in the course of* his history. Certainly nothing which he introspected would appear *sub specie temporis* as "beginning at the end of time and never ceasing". But, if his metaphysical conclusions are correct, the experiences which appear *sub specie temporis* as events in the course of a self's history *do not* constitute a set of parts of that self; it is only those experiences which would appear *sub specie temporis* as "beginning at the end of time and never ceasing" that constitute a set of parts of the self. Thus the experiences which he introspected were not such as form a set of parts of his self; and the experiences which *do* form a set of parts of his self are not such as, *sub specie temporis*, he could have introspected "during his earthly life".

(b) Setting aside McTaggart's metaphysics of the self, and the question whether it is consistent with his psychology, we

must now consider the following point. In Section 3 of Chap. XIV of the present work I insisted that a continuant is always conceived as something which has dispositional properties, and its actual history is always regarded as determined jointly by its supreme dispositions and the circumstances in which it is placed. The importance of dispositions in connexion with selves is even greater than their importance in connexion with material things. At any moment most of our knowledge, beliefs, emotions, etc., exist only in the sense that we *should* be knowing so-and-so or believing so-and-so or feeling such and such an emotion *if* certain conditions, which are not now fulfilled, were to be fulfilled. And, when a baby is born, its self seems to be provided with very little more than dispositions to acquire certain dispositions, e.g., to acquire the power of reasoning, of understanding English, of loving its mother, and so on. Any theory of selves which does not deal with this dispositional aspect of them is radically defective.

Now dispositional properties themselves are, no doubt, merely conditional propositions or facts. But we always tend to assume that such conditional facts have a categorical basis in the more or less permanent *internal structure* of the continuant which is their subject. Thus, e.g., we assume that any bit of matter which has the dispositional property of being magnetic has it because its minute parts are more or less permanently arranged in a certain way in space and move in a certain recurrent pattern in the course of time. In the case of material continuants we can often conjecture with very high probability what *particular* kind of minute internal structure and motion is the categorical basis of a certain dispositional property. In the case of selves the position is much less satisfactory.

If there were continuants which are both material and spiritual, and if "selves" were such continuants considered in respect of their mental characteristics only, the difficulty would be at a minimum. We could suppose that the categorical basis of mental dispositions consists in the minute spatial and kinematic internal structure of these continuants,



considered in respect of their material characteristics. We should then be using "structure" in a perfectly literal and intelligible sense, and we should be supported by the analogy of physics. Even so, the hypothesis would not enable us to predict hitherto unobserved mental phenomena or to gain practical control over them, as the corresponding hypothesis about the categorical basis of material dispositions very often does. But, in any case, McTaggart would reject this expedient as impossible; and, after our discussion in Section 1 of this chapter, we must admit that to talk of "psycho-physical continuants" may merely be to "darken counsel by words without understanding".

The next simplest expedient would be to admit that a self and the organism which it animates cannot be a single psycho-physical continuant, and to hold that the organism is *purely* material; but, nevertheless, to assume that the categorical basis of mental dispositions is entirely confined to the brain and nervous system of the organism. Here again we can use "structure" in a perfectly literal and intelligible sense. But now the self ceases to deserve the name of continuant, and we are on the high-road to epiphenomenalism. In any case McTaggart could not adopt this expedient. For, on his view, that which human observers take to be the body of a man or animal is not really material and is really spiritual. Therefore, even if the categorical basis of a self's dispositions resided, not in it, but in the organism which it animates, there would still be the problem of conceiving a more or less persistent "internal structure" in a purely spiritual continuant. For the organism, if McTaggart is right, must be either a self or an experience or a group whose members are selves or experiences or both.

It is evident then that any such theory as McTaggart's must either abandon all attempt to postulate a categorical basis for the innate and acquired dispositional properties of a self or must conceive this categorical basis in purely *mental* terms. The first of these alternatives is extremely unattractive. It is, no doubt, true that we must eventually come to dispositional properties for which no categorical basis can be



suggested. Thus, e.g., we may explain the dispositional properties of gases, such as Boyle's Law, by referring to their molecular structure and the movements of their molecules. But any such explanation requires dispositional properties, such as inertia, elasticity, etc., in the molecules. We may, perhaps, explain these dispositional properties by referring to the electronic structure of the molecules and the motion of the electrons round a nucleus. But any such explanation requires dispositional properties, such as electric charge and the general laws of electromagnetism, in the electrons and the nucleus. And these, in the present state of our knowledge, must simply be taken as irreducible conditional facts about electrons and protons. Since we must, in every case, eventually come to dispositional properties for which we can find no categorical basis, it would not be surprising if *some* of the dispositional properties of minds were, in this sense, ultimate. But it is difficult to believe that *all* or *most* of a self's dispositional properties are just ultimate conditional facts about it with no categorical basis. One might be willing to take this view of the supreme and innate dispositional properties, such as retentiveness and the power of forming associations. But it is very difficult to take this view of the more specific dispositional properties which a self acquires in the course of its life; e.g., one's power to remember certain incidents in one's past history, one's ability to prove the theorem of Pythagoras, one's power to understand statements made in German, and so on. It is almost impossible to doubt that these acquired dispositions depend on some modification, which has been made in the self or the brain in the course of its history, and has persisted since then as a permanent cause-factor ready to co-operate with variable cause-factors in producing from time to time actual experiences of remembering the event or of demonstrating the theorem or of understanding German sentences.

Now, on such a view as McTaggart's, these persistent modifications which are the categorical basis of a self's acquired dispositions cannot reside in the brain or in any other material continuant. They must be modifications of some-

thing which is purely mental. And the difficulty is to form any positive conception of such modifications. If we now talk of innate "structure" or of modifications in "structure", which occur in the course of a self's history and then persist, we must be using the word "structure" metaphorically; and it is extremely difficult to see what can be the cash-value of the metaphor.

This difficulty about dispositions will arise on *any* view of the self which makes it a purely mental and immaterial continuant and which refuses to locate the categorical basis of mental dispositions in the brain and nervous system. I think that the difficulty is more *obvious* when such a view of the self takes the special form of McTaggart's theory, viz., that a self is a whole, that its experiences are parts of it, and that it has a set of parts each of which is one of its experiences. But I suspect that this is simply because McTaggart's form of the theory is definite where other forms of it are discretely vague. Philosophers who have held that selves are purely mental continuants and that the categorical basis of a self's dispositions is purely mental modifications have not generally held that a self's experiences are parts of it. Still less have they held that every self has a set of parts each of which is one of its experiences. They have left us completely in the dark as to the inner nature of the continuants which own experiences; and, under the cover of this darkness, they have talked learnedly about "mental structure" and "mental modifications" and have too often managed to "get away with it". But, when the theory takes the special form which McTaggart gives to it, no such subterfuges are possible. Since, for him, every self has a set of parts each of which is one of its experiences, every internal modification in a self must be a modification of one of its experiences or of a part of one of them or of a group composed of experiences or parts of them. For, if his view of the self be true, there is nothing else in a self to be modified.

Let us take a concrete example in order to make the point quite clear. At a certain time in my life I learnt Euclid's proof of the theorem of Pythagoras. I should say that, ever

since then I have "understood" the argument and have "known how to prove" the theorem. During the greater part of this time I have not been consciously thinking of the theorem or following the argument. I have acquired the dispositional property of being able to have such conscious experiences whenever certain occurrent conditions are fulfilled. Let us suppose, as we commonly do, that this disposition rests on some modification in me which started when I first learnt the theorem at school, which has persisted ever since, and which co-operates with certain occurrent conditions to produce from time to time actual experiences of understanding the theorem and following the proof. On McTaggart's view of the self, the modification which started then must have been some change in my *actual experiences*, or in parts of them, or in some group composed of them or of parts of them or of both. And this change must, in some sense, have continually "propagated itself" along the whole subsequent course of my experience.

The nearest physical analogy that I can suggest is that of the modifications which a speaker on the wireless imposes on the waves which are being emitted from his station when he speaks into the microphone. These modifications propagate themselves as the beam of electric waves travels farther and farther into space. If we compare the mental history of a self to a beam of waves of characteristic wave-length, and imagine the form of these to be modified at various points in its course and the modifications to be propagated along it, we get a very faint and imperfect analogy to the theory of mental dispositions which would be the necessary accompaniment of McTaggart's theory of the self.

(c) The last remark that I wish to make in this connexion is the following. We have seen that, if time be unreal, selves cannot really be continuants and their experiences cannot really be occurrents. Now similar remarks must be made about dispositions. The notion of a disposition is essentially bound up with the possibility of change and persistence. It is something which manifests itself in actual experiences *at certain times* and under certain conditions, and which *persists*

during the intervals when it is not being thus manifested. Therefore, in selves as they really are, on McTaggart's view, there can be no question of dispositions. They have actually and eternally all the experiences that they can have; and they are, in this respect, like God and unlike angels or men in St Thomas's system. This being so, McTaggart has no need to find a place in his theory of the self for *dispositions as such*, any more than he has to find a place in it for the self *as continuant* and its experiences *as occurrents*. He has only to tell us what real factors in the real timeless self are misprehended *sub specie temporis* as mental dispositions, when the self is misprehended *sub specie temporis* as a persistent continuant and its experiences are misprehended as transitory occurrents which together make up its history.

McTaggart never deals explicitly and directly with this question, but it is possible to infer from some of his other doctrines what his answer would have been. As we shall see in due course, McTaggart holds, in consequence of the Principle of Determining Correspondence, that each self eternally prehends a certain total object which consists of certain selves and certain parts of them. What corresponds to this fact, *sub specie temporis*, is the proposition that a self cogitates one and the same total object throughout the whole of its history with varying degrees of clearness and discrimination and with varying distribution of attention. To reconcile this principle with the *prima facie* appearances, which certainly seem to conflict with it, McTaggart has to introduce the notion of confused states of cogitation. (Cf. *Nature of Existence*, p. 227, footnote; and Chap. L, §595 to the end.) If at *any* times in its history a self cogitates a certain object clearly and explicitly, then at *all other times* in its history, this same object is an undiscriminated factor in a total background which the same self cogitates confusedly as an undifferentiated whole. This is the clue to the doctrine which McTaggart would have to hold about mental dispositions. It is obviously very similar to Leibniz's theory on the subject. At present I need say no more about it.

(iv) We can now pass to the fourth proposition which



McTaggart holds about selves. It is that there can be no unowned experiences; every experience must belong to some self. McTaggart says in §400 of *The Nature of Existence* that this seems to him to be self-evident on careful reflexion.

I think that there is a certain ambiguity in the principle which McTaggart finds self-evident. Its minimal meaning is that no particular could have the property of being an experience at any time when it lacked the property of being owned by some self. I am inclined to accept the principle in this form, but to suspect that it merely states part of the meaning of "being an experience". It must be noted that the principle, in this form, does not exclude the possibility that there might be particulars which are exactly like experiences in most other respects but do not belong to any self and therefore would not be called "experiences". It does not even exclude the possibility that one and the same particular might at some times be owned by a self and be an experience and at other times be not owned by a self and therefore be not an experience. If we want to exclude this, we must add that it is self-evidently impossible for any particular to be at some times owned by a self and at other times not owned by a self; or, alternatively, that it is self-evidently impossible for any particular to be at some times an experience and at other times not an experience.

This supplementary principle is certainly not analytical, and it does not seem to me to be self-evident. There is no doubt that McTaggart accepted the principle in the following rigid form. "It is self-evidently impossible that anything remotely resembling an experience should exist without being a part of some self; and it is self-evidently impossible that anything which *ever is* a part of a self should *ever be not* a part of a self." I do not find this self-evident, and I am quite uncertain whether it is true. I believe, e.g., with some confidence that, when a worm is cut in two by a spade or an oyster gets a bit of grit in its shell, there occurs an event characterised by some kind of feeling-tone. But I am quite uncertain whether there is any self which owns this event. For this reason I am doubtful whether it could properly be



called an "experience"; but I assume it to be very much like certain mental events which I own and which are properly called "experiences".

(v) No particular can be a part of more than one self. This, for McTaggart, includes the proposition that no experience can be owned by more than one self. It is asserted in §386 and discussed more elaborately in §401. In the latter section he says: "The peculiar unity which a self has puts it into a relation with its parts which is such that two selves cannot have it to the same part." If we combine this with Proposition (iv) above, we get the following principle. "It is self-evidently impossible that anything which *ever* is a part of any self *S* should *ever be not* a part of *that self*."

If in this principle we substitute the phrase "an experience of" for the phrase "a part of", most people would, I think, accept it as *prima facie* self-evident. They might be unwilling to count a self's experiences as parts of it; and they might be inclined to say that, if selves have parts which are not experiences, we know so little about them that we cannot be sure whether such parts could or could not be shared by two or more selves. As McTaggart did regard the experiences of a self as parts of it, and did hold that every self has a set of parts each member of which is one of its experiences, it will be quite fair to him in discussing this principle to substitute "experience of" for "part of". The question then is whether it is conceivable that one and the same particular should be (either simultaneously or successively) an experience owned by two or more selves.

Now it is quite certain that the *fact* that  $S_1$  is thinking of  $x$  at a certain moment is different from the *fact* that  $S_2$  is thinking of  $x$  at that moment. But it does not necessarily follow that there must be two particulars,  $T_1$  and  $T_2$ , one of which is  $S_1$ 's thought of  $x$  and the other of which is  $S_2$ 's thought of  $x$ . It is conceivable that there might be a single particular  $T$  which has to  $x$  the relation of being a thought of it; that  $T$  counts as an experience of  $S_1$  in virtue of standing in certain relations to certain other particulars  $U_1$ ,  $V_1$ ,  $W_1$ ; and that it counts as an experience of  $S_2$  in virtue of standing

in similar relations to certain other particulars  $U_2$ ,  $V_2$  and  $W_2$ , which do not stand in any such relations to  $U_1$ ,  $V_1$  and  $W_1$ . It seems to me possible that people may have passed unwittingly from the undoubtedly true judgment that there are two *facts* in all such cases to the much more doubtful judgment that there are always two *particulars*. Nevertheless, I do find what I may call the principle of the "Unique Ownership of Experiences" extremely plausible.

(vi) One self cannot be part of another self. McTaggart defends this proposition in §§ 401 to 404 inclusive. Obviously, if two selves cannot have any part in common and all selves have parts, it follows immediately that one self cannot be part of another. For, if  $S_1$  were a part of  $S_2$ , every part of  $S_1$  would also be a part of  $S_2$ .

If a self's experiences are parts of it, I suppose it would follow that  $S_1$  could not be a part of  $S_2$  unless all  $S_1$ 's experiences were also  $S_2$ 's experiences. Now, even if it be possible that *some* experiences should be owned by two selves  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  in the way suggested above, it seems almost incredible that *all*  $S_1$ 's experiences should also belong to another self  $S_2$ . The following geometrical analogy may throw some light on this question. Let us suppose that a self is really a set of experiences inter-related in a certain characteristic way. Let us compare the individual experiences with points; and let us compare the special relation among certain experiences, which makes them and only them experiences of a certain self, with the special relation among certain points which makes them and only them points on a certain circle. Then an experience owned by two selves would be comparable with a point at which two circles intersect each other. In the case of two circles there can be at most two points of intersection; in the case of more complicated curves there can be more. But for all familiar closed curves the number of points of intersection between two of them will be finite, whilst the number of points on each of them will be infinite. Now, unless there is *some* such analogy between points and experiences and between curves and selves, it is difficult to see how two selves could have *any* experiences in common.

And, if the analogy is at all close, it is equally difficult to see how two selves could have *more than a small proportion* of experiences in common.

These remarks seem to me to be valid so long as we confine our attention to what I may call selves "of the same order"; e.g., two human minds. But I suppose that no one has ever suggested that one human self could be part of another. What has been suggested is that one or more human selves might be parts of a single self of a different order, e.g., a racial self or the world-soul. Now I think that it is possible to find a geometrical analogy to this suggestion. As before, we will compare experiences with points and we will compare a human self with a set of points which are all concyclic with each other. Now there is obviously a close analogy between a set of points all of which are on the same *circle* and a set of points all of which are on the same *sphere*. The relation of being co-spherical is the three-dimensional counterpart of the relation of being concyclic. Suppose now that we compare the world-soul with a set of points which are all on the surface of a certain sphere, and compare the individual points with experiences. We then compare each human soul with a set of points confined to one *great circle* on this sphere; and each different human soul will correspond to a different great circle. Then every experience of any human self would also be an experience of the world-soul. And the world-soul would be a self of a higher order than our own, which we should have to conceive, as best we could, by analogy with our own, as a two-dimensional being would have to conceive a sphere by analogy with the circles which he has perceived.

Some readers may be inclined to condemn these analogies and speculations as fantastic and idle. In view of the fact of telepathy, the fairly good evidence for pure clairvoyance, and the alleged existence of other supernormal mental powers, and in view of the difficulty of explaining them in terms of conventional theories of the self, I do not consider that we can safely dismiss such speculations as baseless or useless.

So far I have considered the question whether one self could be part of another on the assumption that the ex-

periences of a self are parts of it. If a self's experiences be not parts of it, as many people would hold, it is logically possible that  $S_1$  should be a part of  $S_2$  without all (or, indeed, any) of  $S_1$ 's experiences being also experiences of  $S_2$ . But, in that case, I simply do not know what would be meant by saying that  $S_1$  was a part of  $S_2$ . And, since I should have no clear conception of the proposition in question, I could not say whether it is possible or impossible.

Some people have thought that cases of multiple personality are evidence for the inclusion of one self in another. McTaggart discusses this opinion in §404, and concludes that all the known facts can be explained without the hypothesis of inclusion. The vast majority of them, he thinks, require nothing more startling than the hypothesis that there is one and only one self connected with the patient's body and that all the experiences of the various personalities belong to this self, but that it suffers unusually sudden and profound oscillations in temperament and in the range of its memory. If any of the facts require more for their explanation than this, then the following hypothesis will, he thinks, suffice to explain them. We may suppose that the body of the patient is animated by two or more selves, instead of the usual one self; but we need not suppose that any of these selves has any part in common with any other of them. I agree with McTaggart that the facts of multiple personality, so far as they are known to me, provide no strong evidence for the view that one self can include other selves.

McTaggart thinks that the belief that one self can be part of another has arisen from two confusions, which he discusses in §§402 and 403. The first is as follows. One self can be a "manifestation of" another self, in the sense that it owes its embodiment to that other and that its character is a typical product of the training and example of that other. In this sense it might be said that Mr Pitt was a manifestation of the first Earl of Chatham. Now a self can also be a "manifestation of" a whole of which it is a part. In this sense it might be said that Mr Pitt was a manifestation of the governing classes of England in the latter part of the eighteenth century.



But the whole which is thus manifested by Mr Pitt and contains him as a part is a society and not another self. McTaggart thinks that people have been led, from the true premises that a self can manifest another self and that a self can manifest a whole of which it is a part, to the false conclusion that a self can manifest another self by being a part of it. He thinks, in particular, that this is how some people have come to combine the two beliefs that God is a self and that men are parts of him.

The second alleged confusion is the following. Many people have held that God, and he only, canprehend the experiences of other selves. And they have held that he is in fact acquainted with all the experiences of all other selves. They have then either confused prehending an experience with owning it, or have thought that the former conveyed the latter. And so they have mistakenly passed to the belief that all other selves are parts of that self which is God.

(vii) The characteristic of being a self does not, by itself, convey the property of being aware of something or other at every moment. So far as we can see there is no logical impossibility in a particular being a self at times when it is not cogitating at all. This statement is made in §397. We must note, however, that, when the principles peculiar to McTaggart's system are introduced as additional premises, he does claim to prove that every self is, *sub specie temporis*, aware of something or other at every moment of its existence.

(viii) It is possible for there to be selves which are not self-conscious. McTaggart asserts this in §397 and defends it in §§398 and 399.

Those who have maintained that nothing could be a self without being self-conscious may have meant either of two things. (a) They may have meant that a particular could *never* be aware of *anything* unless it were *sometimes* aware of itself; and that a particular which could never be aware of anything could not properly be called a "self". Or (b) they may mean merely that it would be inappropriate to apply the name "self" to a being which was never aware of itself, even though such a being were at times aware of other things.



On the first interpretation they are making a statement about an alleged fact; on the second they are making a statement about the appropriate usage of a certain word.

In §398 McTaggart denies the proposition in its factual interpretation. He says that he is fairly certain that he has been aware of other things at times when he was not in fact prehending himself because his attention was engrossed by these other things. It might, of course, be alleged that, even on these occasions, he was really prehending himself, but that the experience was so faint and uninteresting that he could not remember it afterwards. It might also be said that, even if he *was* not prehending himself on these occasions, he *could* have done so, in the sense that he *would* have if he had chosen to attend. McTaggart admits both these contentions. He says that we should, no doubt, have to adopt one or other of them as an hypothesis if there were any reason to think that awareness of other things could not occur without actual or at least possible contemporary awareness of self. But he says that he can see no necessary connexion between being aware of other things and being capable of becoming aware of oneself. He does not see why there should not be particulars which are aware of other things, but are not and can never become aware of themselves.

If the proposition which McTaggart denies be interpreted simply as a statement about the correct usage of the word "self", it ceases to be of much importance. It would certainly be most inconvenient to say that beings which are sometimes aware of themselves and sometimes not are "selves" on the former occasions and are not "selves" on the latter occasions. But no one has proposed to use the word "self" in this way. I think that many people would prefer to use the word "mind" or "soul" for anything that has selfhood in McTaggart's sense, regardless of whether it is capable of being aware of itself or not; and to confine the name "self" to those minds or souls which are capable of being aware of themselves as well as of other things. But, so long as we say how we are going to use the word and then use it consistently, the particular convention which we adopt is unimportant.

Before leaving this topic I must point out that there is an important matter of fact which we are liable to overlook if we accept McTaggart's principle too lightheartedly. It is this. No one would feel the least difficulty in accepting the statement that there might be particulars which are aware of noises and tastes and smells and colour-expanses but are not capable of being aware of temperatures. Now, when we say that there might be particulars which are aware of other things but are not capable of being aware of themselves, we are making a statement which is verbally similar to the former. But we should be very much mistaken if we thought that the latter statement really committed us to nothing more serious than the former. If and only if a being is sometimes aware of itself, it includes among its experiences some which may be called "reflexive"; i.e., certain experiences which stand to certain of *its other experiences* in the relation of prehension to prehensum. It differs from any conscious being which is not self-conscious in being a "double-decked", as contrasted with a "single-decked", structure. A conscious being which was aware of temperatures as well as noises, tastes, smells, and colour-expanses would not differ in this way from one which was not aware of temperatures but was aware of all the other kinds of sensibilia of which the former was aware. The two would differ only in respect of having more or fewer *kinds* of experiences of *the same order*.

Now it is plain that the presence of reflexive experiences introduces into the mental history of any being which has them a new and very much more intimate kind of unity, which could not exist in the mental history of any being which had only first-order experiences. The difference between a conscious being which was, and one which was not, self-conscious would be a radical difference in kind and not a mere difference in degree.

Next, we must remember that, from the nature of the case, the only *conscious* beings about which we can have any direct or approximately direct information are *self-conscious* beings. For the only completely direct information which anyone can have is provided by his own introspection and personal

memory of his own past experiences; and this can occur only in a self-conscious being. Again, the only approximately direct information which anyone can get about conscious beings is supplied by statements made to him by other conscious beings about their experiences. Now only beings who were self-conscious could make statements about themselves and their own experiences.

Putting these facts together, we must, I think, come to the following conclusion. It is difficult, if not impossible, for us to form any clear conception of a being which is capable of prehending other things but is incapable of being aware of itself and its own experiences. Our only available data are beings which are both conscious of other things and self-conscious; and the second characteristic is not one which can be thought of as just added to the first without modifying in any other respect the being who possesses it. Therefore I cannot see clearly either that there *could* or that there *could not* be entities which are conscious of other things but not conscious of themselves. Where one has no clear conception of the terms of a proposition one cannot hope to see clearly whether it is necessary or impossible or contingent.

(ix) Every human self does in fact from time to time *prehend* itself as a self. This is first asserted in §382, and a great part of Chap. xxxvi is taken up with defending it. I shall devote a separate section to McTaggart's defence of this very important proposition; but I shall make some explanatory comments on it here.

(a) I suppose that everyone admits that, in some sense, all human minds are from time to time "self-conscious". But not everyone would admit that any human mind ever prehends itself as a self. McTaggart is concerned to show that human minds would not be self-conscious, in the sense in which they admittedly are, unless each of them prehended itself as a self from time to time.

He remarks in §393 that most recent philosophers have not accepted this proposition; and he tries to account for this fact as follows. The particular which is one's self "is much more elusive than those other existent realities which we are aware

of by" prehension. It is divided into parts which are not selves but are experiences. One can prehend these parts; and, whenever a self prehends itself, it generally *also* prehends some of the experiences which are parts of it. It is therefore easy to think that it is *only* one's experiences that one prehends, and to suppose that one is aware of one's self only discursively as *the* entity which answers to a certain description. This is a mistake; but it cannot be corrected by straightforward introspection. It can be refuted only by a rather elaborate argument, which shows that it is inconsistent with certain recognised facts.

We might compare the self, on McTaggart's view of it, with the auditory field, and we might compare the experiences which we notice with outstanding noises. We are very much inclined to ignore the faint dull background of sound and to think of the various outstanding noises as independent entities instead of differentiations within an auditory continuum. It is only when we are put into a sound-proof room in a psychological laboratory that we learn, by noticing the difference from our ordinary experience, that there is always a background of sound. And even there we do not cease to have auditory experiences; we merely begin to notice those, due to internal causes, which we formerly overlooked.

(b) In §392 McTaggart affirms, as against Bradley, that there is no kind of *a priori* impossibility in a particular prehending itself. Terms can stand in relations to themselves; e.g., a man can be his own cousin or his own trustee. And there is nothing in the nature of prehension to prevent a particular which can stand in this relation to others from standing in this relation to itself.

We must notice that, on McTaggart's view of prehension, the doctrine that a self *S* prehends itself is much less open to this kind of objection than it would be on some other views. According to him, the statement that *S* prehends *O* means that *S* contains a part *P* which is a prehension of *O*. The primary relation is that of prehension to prehensum; the relation of prehending self to prehended object is a derived relation, in the sense in which that of uncle to nephew is.



derived. Thus the statement that  $S$  prehends  $S$  means that there is a certain particular  $P$  which (a) is an experience of  $S$ , and therefore a part of it on McTaggart's view, and (b) stands to  $S$  in the relation of prehension to prehensum. Now no one would object to the statement that a body  $B$  had a part  $P$ , e.g., an appendix, which was poisoning it. Yet this involves that  $B$  has to itself the relation which is the relative product of the relation of whole to part and the relation of poisoning. And it would be quite good English to say that such a body was "poisoning itself". Now it is important to notice that McTaggart's theory of self-prehension does not involve any more direct relation of a self to itself than this. A critic who objected on *a priori* grounds to a *direct* relation between a self and itself, could hardly object on these grounds to the possibility of an indirect relation of this kind.

(c) McTaggart's doctrine that every human self prehends itself as such from time to time needs further qualification in the light of what he says in §§ 395 and 396. Here he raises the following question. Suppose that the self  $S$  at a certain moment  $t$  prehends itself as a self; does this justify it in believing that the same self exists at other moments? McTaggart is, of course, talking here for the occasion as if time were real. He answers that this prehension guarantees the existence of this self throughout a period stretching back from  $t$  to  $t - \tau$ , where  $\tau$  is the duration of its specious present. It does not guarantee that this self existed before  $t - \tau$  or that it will exist after  $t$ . Some people hold that there is a longer period  $\tau'$  over which ostensible memory gives knowledge, and not merely a strong rational belief, that the ostensibly remembered events really happened. Suppose that this is so. Then if  $S$  ostensibly remembers at  $t$  that he had a certain experience at  $t'$ , where  $t'$  falls within the period from  $t - \tau'$  to  $t$ , this guarantees the existence of  $S$  throughout the period between  $t'$  and  $t$ . Beyond these limits  $S$  can have no certainty that he existed, though he may have very good grounds for believing that he did and for expecting that he will.

I do not think that the positive part of either of these statements is justified by McTaggart's premises. ( $\alpha$ ) His



general doctrine of the specious present is that, if a self prehends at a moment  $t$  something as having a characteristic  $\phi$ , then at *some moment or other* within the period from  $t - \tau$  to  $t$  there existed something which had the characteristic  $\phi$  (see §514, last sentence). Here, however, he seems to assume that, in these conditions, there certainly existed something having  $\phi$  at *every moment* within this interval. ( $\beta$ ) I cannot see that  $S$ 's ostensible memory at  $t$  that he had a certain experience at  $t'$ , even if it were self-evidently correct, could do more than guarantee that  $S$  existed at  $t'$ . Does it follow from this premise alone that  $S$  persisted between  $t'$  and  $t$ ?

For our present purpose, however, the important point is, not whether these statements of McTaggart's justified, but what qualifications they introduce into his doctrine of self-prehension. It seems plain that, when McTaggart says that at a certain moment I prehend *myself as a whole* and not only states of myself, this is not to be taken quite literally. We must remember that he holds that my self is a whole of which my experiences are parts; that in all probability this same self has lasted at any rate for many years; and that at any moment I do not literally prehend any part of my self which falls outside the temporal limits of my specious present at that moment. Surely, then, it is not strictly accurate to say that there is any moment at which I *prehend my self*. The accurate statement would seem to be as follows. There are certain moments in my life at each of which I prehend a different *thin temporal slice* of the *history of my self*. Each such slice, though it is only a limited segment of the history of my self in respect of temporal "thickness", stretches right across this history in respect of "breadth"; i.e., it is not a mere strand of experience with other strands parallel to it in my mental history. It may be compared to a short complete segment of a rope, as contrasted with the segment of a single component thread of the rope. Since McTaggart identifies a self, *sub specie temporis*, with its total mental history, he would be entitled to say that at each one of these moments I prehend a different thin temporal slice of *my self*, which coincides in "breadth" with *my self* throughout its whole tem-

poral "thickness". But he is certainly not entitled to say more than this, if he is speaking with strict accuracy.

No doubt, if this much be granted, there may well be a sense in which I could properly be said to "perceive" my self. But we must clearly understand that, in this sense, "perceive" is not equivalent to "prehend", as McTaggart always intends it to be. I think that the point can be made quite plain by considering the analogy to sense-perception. There are certain conditions under which I could say quite properly and truly that I am *seeing* a certain *solid body*, e.g., a cricket-ball. And seeing is a species of perceiving. Yet, even on the most naively realistic view of sense-perception, I am *prehending* only a small part of its surface, and I am *perceptually accepting* this sensum as part of the closed surface of a spherical solid. But this is not all. Even on the most naively realistic view of sense-perception I am *prehending* only a *thin contemporary slice of the history* of that small part of the surface which I am said to be "seeing" in the strict sense. I take this sensum to be the contemporary phase in the history of a certain part of a certain surface, and I perceptually accept the proposition that there were earlier and will be later phases in its history. It seems to me that the two factors which I have mentioned separately in the last sentence are inseparably connected with each other. There is no meaning in the statement that so-and-so is the contemporary phase in the history of something unless we take it for granted that there were earlier states, or that there will be later ones, adjoined temporally to this one and so related to it that the whole series counts as the history of something.

Now, if "perceive" is used in what I consider to be its proper sense, viz., for a cogitative experience which includes prehension but also includes perceptual acceptance of propositions not guaranteed by the prehensive element alone, there is no reason why McTaggart should not say that a human self sometimes "perceives itself", even after the admissions which he has made. To perceive one's self would be to prehend a certain short and nearly contemporary total event, and to accept it perceptually as a thin slice of the history of

one's self. If one *prehended* such a particular as having *selfhood*, which is what McTaggart's various statements when put together and taken literally would entail, one would grossly misprehend it. For it is quite certain, on any view, that the content of a single specious present *is not* a self. And, on McTaggart's theory, though not on some other theories, it is equally certain that it does not in any sense *contain* the self as a part, factor, or element. In the strict sense of "prehend", such a particular can be prehended only as having certain psychical qualities, such as painfulness, fearfulness, etc., and as containing certain sub-events, such as a longing expectation of tea. But, if I *prehend* such a particular as having such qualities or such parts, and *accept it perceptually* as a short contemporary slice of the history of myself, then I am *perceiving* my self in the only sense in which I ever perceive any material continuant even on the most realistic view of sense-perception.

In the Introduction to the present volume of this work I pointed out how unfortunate it was that McTaggart should have used the word "perception" in the way that he did, and I substituted the word "prehension" for it. I developed the distinction between prehension and perception, in the proper meaning of the latter, more fully in Chap. XXVII, where I tried to show that the problem of sense-perception cannot possibly be treated satisfactorily unless this distinction is kept in mind. Most philosophers who have written of late years on sense-perception have been quite clear on this point. But I am afraid that it is still necessary to insist that the distinction between prehending and perceiving is just as important in dealing with self-consciousness as in dealing with sense-perception. As we have seen, McTaggart, who fails to draw the distinction and professes always to use "perception" to mean what we have called "prehension", has landed himself in the following quagmire about self-consciousness. After having claimed to prove that each human self perceives itself, in the sense of *prehending itself*, he makes statements which are entirely inconsistent with that view; though they may be consistent with the view that each human self perceives itself,

in the sense of *prehending something* which it *perceptually accepts* as a thin contemporary slice of its own mental history.

(d) Let us now put together the qualifications in McTaggart's doctrine of self-prehension which are necessitated by his statements in §§ 392, 395, and 396 discussed above under the headings (b) and (c). The statement that every human self does from time to time prehend itself as a self reduces to the following more accurate and less exciting proposition. The history of any human self contains certain experiences each of which is a prehension of a certain almost contemporary total event of short duration. These events are prehended as having psychical qualities and as containing sub-events which are experiences of various kinds. And each such prehended total event is perceptually accepted as a thin slice of the history of the self which prehends it. If McTaggart's argument (which we have yet to consider) to show that there must be self-prehension should claim to prove more than this, then it will claim to prove more than McTaggart, by his own subsequent admissions, had any right to accept.

(x) The characteristic of being a self, i.e., selfhood, is simple and unanalysable. Each of us has an idea of it simply because each of us has prehended a certain particular, viz., himself, as having it. In this respect it is like redness or temporal succession. This is asserted in § 382 of *The Nature of Existence*. McTaggart reiterates the statement in § 394, where he says: "We can perceive no parts or elements of which it is composed, any more than we can with the quality of redness. Like redness it is simple and indefinable."

The following comments may be made on this proposition. (a) It must, of course, be carefully distinguished from another, which has been held by many philosophers, viz., that every *self* is a simple *particular*. Since McTaggart holds that no particulars are simple, he could not possibly hold that selves are simple particulars. And it is perfectly plain from his own statements that selves are complex particulars and that their experiences are parts of them.

To insist on this point might seem like labouring the obvious. But there are two good reasons for running this



risk. ( $\alpha$ ) The view that a self canprehend itself has often been combined with the view that a self is a simple particular which is, in some sense, a constituent of all its experiences. It has rarely, if ever, before been combined with the view that a self is a complex particular whose parts are its experiences. It is even doubtful whether it *can* consistently be combined with the latter view. A careless reader, with these facts at the back of his mind and seeing that McTaggart accepts self-prehension, may make the gross mistake of assuming, in spite of McTaggart's explicit statements to the contrary, that McTaggart holds some kind of Pure Ego theory of the self. ( $\beta$ ) McTaggart contrasts his own theory with what he calls the "bundle-theory" of the self. He regards Hume's theory as an instance of this. He professes to refute bundle-theories of the self. Now one is inclined to think of Pure Ego theories and bundle-theories as exhaustive alternatives about the self. A careless reader, with this assumption in mind and seeing that McTaggart rejects bundle-theories, may be tempted to assume, in spite of McTaggart's explicit statements to the contrary, that McTaggart must accept some form of Pure Ego theory. I shall try to show, in due course, that McTaggart's own theory is not so different from a bundle-theory as he would have us believe.

(b) When McTaggart's statements in §§395 and 396 are taken into account it becomes very doubtful, as we have seen, whether he has any right to say that a human self ever *pre-hends itself*. From time to time it prehends a certain almost contemporary total event of short duration, viz., the total content of a specious present, and it perceptually accepts this as a thin slice of its own history. It does notprehend this as a self, though it mayprehend it as having such qualities that it must be a slice of the history of a *self* if it is a slice of the history of *anything*.

(c) Now at this point the following question may fairly be raised. How do we get the idea of selfhood? If McTaggart's original statements had remained unqualified by his subsequent remarks in §§395 and 396, the answer would have been easy. Each of us would have got the idea of selfhood through



prehending a certain particular, viz., himself, as a self; just as each of us has got the idea of redness through prehending certain sensibilia as red. But this answer is not compatible with the qualifications introduced in §§395 and 396. Nevertheless McTaggart continues to give it and never notices that it has ceased to be relevant.

We have certainly, in some sense, got the idea of selfhood. This is not only an obvious fact on its own merits; it is also involved in the theory that, when we prehend certain total events, we perceptually accept them as thin slices of the histories of our selves. Yet, if the modified theory is correct, we never prehend any particular as a self in the sense in which we prehend some particulars as unpleasant experiences and some particulars as squeakings. And, if we reflect, this seems clearly true. The idea of a self is the idea of a continuant of a certain kind. Surely it is obvious that I cannot literally prehend anything as a continuant, in the sense in which I can prehend some particulars as unpleasant experiences and others as squeakings. How, then, does one get the idea of selfhood? And, if the characteristic of selfhood is simple, and the idea of it is not got through prehending particulars as characterised by it, must not this idea be an *a priori* concept? Yet is not this a very hard saying?

It is important to notice that an exactly similar problem arises over the concept of material thing even on the most naively realistic theory of sense-perception. Even if there be particulars which are in fact solid massive continuants, no one has ever prehendend any particular as a solid massive continuant in the sense in which he has prehendend some particulars as squeakings and others as what Mr Wisdom would call "reddings". This is true even if the particulars which we prehend as reddings have in fact been contemporary phases in the histories of parts of the surfaces of solid massive continuants. Yet we have certainly, in some sense, got the idea of material thinghood. This is not only an obvious fact on its own merits; it is also involved in the fact that, when we prehend certain particulars as reddings, we perceptually accept them as contemporary phases in the histories of parts

of the surfaces of material things. How then does one get the idea of material thinghood? Is this characteristic simple or complex? And, if it is simple, must not the idea of it be an *a priori* concept?

I should suppose that the answer to these questions is, in principle, the same in both cases. Neither the characteristic of selfhood nor that of material thinghood is simple; and the concept of each of them is in part *a priori* and in part empirical. Selfhood and material thinghood are two different specifications of the more abstract characteristic of being a continuant. The concept of this is *a priori*; but the concepts of its two different determinate specifications involve notions which are empirical. In the concept of material thinghood the empirical notions of being contained within a closed spatial boundary and occupying the same spatial position or a continuous series of such positions throughout a period of time are important constituents. In the concept of selfhood it is much harder to name the empirical notions. One empirically conceived factor is the peculiar kind of unity which ties together various simultaneous experiences in a single specious present; another is the fact that some experiences in one specious present are ostensibly memories of certain experiences in earlier specious presents; another is the fact that certain experiences in one specious present are ostensibly fulfilments or frustrations of certain expectations in earlier specious presents; and so on. When people say that the characteristic of selfhood is simple and that the concept of it is empirical I suspect that what they mean is often no more than that the empirical factors in it are quite unique and peculiar and cannot be defined in terms of the empirical factors in the notion of material thinghood. This seems to me to be plainly true.

One other point remains to be noticed in this connexion. The characteristics which differentiate selfhood from material thinghood and both from the generic characteristic of being a continuant are not such that they could be prehended in any *one* experience. The concepts of them can be reached only by comparing what is prehended at one time with what has

been prehended at other times, reflecting on these data, and noting certain relations between them. This, of course, involves comparing what is now being prehended with what is no longer being prehended but is now only being remembered. This is a very different mental act from that of prehending two terms, which are both presented simultaneously, as standing in a certain relation to each other. It is easy to illustrate the point both in regard to selfhood and in regard to material thinghood. It is conceivable that a self, in McTaggart's sense of the word, should have a reflexive prehension at one and only one moment in its life. It would thenprehend what *is in fact* an almost contemporary thin total slice of its own mental history. But it is surely quite evident that it could not *perceptually accept* this prehended particular as a slice of its own mental history. Unless and until a self has prehended many such particulars and has held the results of its former prehensions in memory it is in no position to accept any of them perceptually as a slice of its own mental history. It seems to me quite clear that a self which had one and only one reflexive prehension in the whole course of its life could not be said to have "perceived itself as a self" even in the loosest sense of the word "perceive". On the other hand, a self which had had one and only one prehension of a particular as a pleasant experience might quite well have a notion of pleasantness.

Similarly, we can imagine a self prehending for the first time what *is in fact* a part of the surface of a solid material thing. But it is surely evident that it could not *perceptually accept* this prehended particular as a part of such a surface. Until a self has prehended many such particulars and has held the results of its former prehensions in memory, it is in no position to accept any of them perceptually as a part of the surface of a solid body. On the other hand, a self which had had one and only one prehension of a particular as red or as between two others might quite well have a notion of redness or of spatial betweenness.

2.11. *Summary of McTaggart's Doctrine of the Self.* I think that the ten propositions, which I have enunciated and dis-

cussed above, contain all the essential points in McTaggart's theory of the self, so far as this is independent of his special metaphysical principles. I have deemed it necessary to accompany most of the propositions with rather elaborate comments and criticisms. It will therefore be well, before going further, to recapitulate McTaggart's theory briefly, applying to it without more ado the elucidations and corrections suggested above.

From what I have said in commenting on the various propositions it will be evident that I think that the theory falls into two parts. It appears to me that there is a common stem, which divides at a certain point into what seem *prima facie* to be two different and inconsistent branches. These may be called respectively the "Unqualified" and the "Qualified" forms of the theory. The unqualified form is that, if *S* be a human self, then *sub specie temporis* it is true to say that *S* from time to time *prehends S as a self*. The statements made in §§395 and 396 of *The Nature of Existence* seem to imply a different form of the theory, which I call the "qualified" form of it. According to this, if *S* be a human self, then *sub specie temporis* it is true to say that *S* from time to time prehends what are in fact nearly contemporary thin slices of its own mental history. Since, on McTaggart's view, such a slice neither *is* the self *S* nor *contains* that self as a part, factor, or element, but, on the contrary, *is a part of S*, it seems impossible to reconcile this form of the theory with the unqualified statement that *S prehends itself as a self*. As McTaggart does not recognise any discrepancy, he does not work out the qualified form of the theory in detail but keeps henceforth to the unqualified form of it. I have tried to show that, in order to develop the qualified form of the theory, it would be necessary to distinguish between "perceiving", in the sense of prehending, and "perceiving", in the sense of a complex form of cognition which includes prehension but also includes perceptual acceptance of propositions which go beyond what the prehension by itself will guarantee. McTaggart fails to make any such distinction, and certainly intends to use "perceiving" everywhere as equivalent to "prehending".



I will first recapitulate the propositions which belong to the common stem from which the two forms of the theory diverge. (i) There are certain particulars which appear to us to be selves, and there are certain particulars which appear to us to be experiences. We will call the former "ostensible selves" and the latter "ostensible experiences". (ii) Ostensible selves appear *sub specie temporis* to be continuants, which endure through time and have histories. Ostensible experiences appear *sub specie temporis* to be occurrents or events or processes. (iii) *Sub specie temporis* every ostensible experience appears to be an occurrent in some ostensible self as continuant; i.e., the former appears as an event in the history of the latter. (iv) No ostensible experience ever appears *sub specie temporis* to be an occurrent in more than one ostensible self; i.e., an ostensible experience never appears as an event in the histories of two or more ostensible selves. (v) Ostensible selves, like all particulars, are complex wholes having other particulars as parts. (vi) If a particular *P* appears *sub specie temporis* as an experience in the history of an enduring self *S*, then *S* is really a timeless whole of a certain kind and *P* is really a certain kind of timeless part of it. (vii) Ostensible selves have parts which are not ostensible experiences. But every ostensible self has a *set of parts*, in McTaggart's technical sense of the phrase, each member of which is one of its ostensible experiences. Therefore every part of an ostensible self is either one of its ostensible experiences, or a part of one of them, or a group each member of which is either an ostensible experience or a part of one. (viii) One ostensible self cannot be part of another. (ix) It is not involved in the meaning of "selfhood" that a self should, *sub specie temporis*, be cogitating something at every moment of its history. (x) It is possible for there to be particulars whichprehend other things but are incapable of prehending themselves or their own experiences. The word "self" is used by McTaggart to cover these as well as particulars which are capable of reflexive cognition. (xi) *Sub specie temporis* it is true to say that every human self from time to time "perceives" itself. (xii) This is by no means obvious to direct



introspection. It needs proof; and it can be proved only indirectly by showing that alternatives which are incompatible with it are inconsistent with certain admitted facts. (xiii) It is by means of self-perception, and by that means alone, that each human being has got the notion of selfhood.

We have now completed the statement of what I called the "Common Stem". The two branches diverge according to how one interprets the ambiguous word "perceive" in Proposition xi of the Common Stem. I will first state the Unqualified Form and then the Qualified Form. I will enumerate the propositions in the former by Latin letters and those in the latter by Greek letters.

The unqualified form of the theory consists of the following propositions. (a) *Sub specie temporis* it is true to say that every human self from time to time *prehends itself*. (b) In doing so it prehends itself *as* having selfhood. (c) The characteristic of selfhood is a simple unanalysable characteristic like redness or spatial betweenness. (d) The concept of selfhood is empirical and not *a priori*, and each of us has got it by prehending a certain particular, viz., himself, as having it.

The qualified form of the theory, as stated by McTaggart, consists of only one proposition, labelled ( $\alpha$ ) below. The others which follow are what seem to me to be the necessary supplements of this. I shall enumerate them by dashed letters, in order to distinguish them from those which McTaggart would have accepted. I assume that he would have rejected them; since he continued to hold the unqualified form of the theory, and therefore presumably thought that the statements in §§ 395 and 396 are compatible with it.

( $\alpha$ ) *Sub specie temporis* it is true to say of any human self that there are moments at each of which it *knows by prehension* that it has existed throughout the duration of the specious present associated with that moment. But there is no moment at which it *knows* that it existed before the beginning of the specious present associated with that moment. ( $\beta'$ ) It follows that, *sub specie temporis*, there is no moment at which a human self *prehends itself*. At most there are moments at each of which it prehends a certain total event

which is the slice of its own history that occupies the specious present associated with that moment. Such a particular is *sub specie aeternitatis* a part, and *only a part*, of its self. ( $\gamma'$ ) Such particulars, when prehended, are not prehended as having selfhood, i.e., as being selves; and, if they were, they would be grossly misprehended. They are prehended as having certain psychical qualities of an emotional, volitional, or hedonic kind as wholes, and as having parts which are experiences of one kind or another. ( $\delta'$ ) Such a particular, when prehended by a self, is *perceptually accepted* by that self as a contemporary thin slice of its own mental history. ( $\epsilon'$ ) Therefore, although *sub specie temporis* it is false to say that there are moments at which a human self *prehends* itself as a self, it is true to say that there are moments at which it *perceives* itself as a self. It is as true to say this as it would be to say, on the most naively realistic view of sense-perception, that a self perceives a solid material thing at which it is looking. ( $\zeta'$ ) The characteristic of selfhood is a certain specific form of the generic characteristic of being a continuant. ( $\eta'$ ) One's concept of selfhood cannot possibly be a purely empirical concept of a certain simple characteristic, derived from prehending a certain particular (viz., one's self) as having it. For we *prehend* no particular as having *this* characteristic; and the concept of being a continuant, of which the concept of being a self is a specific form, is *a priori*. ( $\theta'$ ) The concepts of the specific factors in selfhood are empirical and are derived from our reflexive prehensions of thin total slices of our own mental histories. ( $\iota'$ ) But they are not such as could possibly be derived from a single prehension of such an object, as, e.g., the concept of redness might be derived from a single prehension of a sensible as red. In order to get concepts of the specific factors in selfhood it is necessary to retain, in some sense, the results of previous reflexive prehensions, and to note certain relations between their objects and the object which is now being reflexively prehended.

2.2. *McTaggart's Argument for Reflexive Self-prehension.* I propose to state what I believe to be the essentials of McTaggart's argument in my own way. Before doing so I would

remark that I use the phrase "reflexive self-prehension" here to denote prehension *by a self of itself*. The phrase "self-prehension" alone might possibly be ambiguous, since it might cover prehension by a self of *another* self. On McTaggart's view, the latter is both possible and actual; though, on many views, it is either impossible or not actual. So it is specially important for us to avoid ambiguity in our terms at this point.

2.21. *Analysis of Ego-centric Facts*. Speaking in temporal terms it is true to say that each of us from time to time knows certain facts which he would naturally express by sentences of the form "I am having such and such an experience". I propose to call these "Ego-centric Facts". Examples are such facts as one would express by saying "I am feeling tired", "I am wanting my tea", "I am thinking of the square-root of 2", and so on.

McTaggart takes it for granted that, when a person knows such a fact, he is prehending a certain particular as an experience of such and such a kind; e.g., in our examples, the person is prehending a certain particular as a feeling of tiredness or as a desire for tea or as a thought of the square-root of 2, as the case may be. If this be granted, there still remain three conceivable analyses of ego-centric facts. These may be called the "Proper-Name Theory", the "Disguised Description Theory", and the "Logical Construction Theory".

According to the Proper-Name Theory the person who knows an ego-centric fact is prehending, not only a certain particular as an experience of a certain kind, but also another particular. He prehends this latter particular *as a self*; and he uses the word "I" as a proper name, in the logical sense, for this prehended particular. The fact which he knows is that the particular which he prehends as a certain kind of experience stands in a certain relation  $R$  to the particular which he prehends as a self and designates "I".  $R$  is the relation of an occurrent or state to the continuant or substance which owns it.

According to the Disguised Description Theory the person who knows an ego-centric fact is not prehending any particular

as a self and is not using the word "I" as a proper name in the logical sense. In addition to prehending a certain particular as an experience of a certain kind he is *thinking of a certain characteristic C*, which may be simple or complex. And the fact which he knows when he says "I am having such and such an experience" would be more properly expressed by saying "There is one and only one particular which has the characteristic *C*, and this experience has to it the relation *R*." Here *R* is the same relation as in the Proper-Name Theory.

According to the Logical Construction Theory the person who knows an ego-centric fact is not prehending any particular as a self and is not using the word "I" as a proper name in the logical sense. But he is also not knowing, with regard to a certain characteristic *C*, that there is one and only one particular which has *C* and that the experience which he is prehending has to it the relation *R*. The fact which he knows when he says "I am having such and such an experience" would be more properly expressed by saying "This experience has to certain other particulars, which (whatever they may be) are not selves, certain relations *S*, *T*, *U*, etc., which (whatever they may be) are not the relation of an occurrent to the continuant that owns it."

It is plain that, if the Proper-Name Theory be true, the structure of ego-centric facts is mirrored very accurately in the structure of ego-centric sentences. If the Disguised Description Theory be true, ego-centric sentences are misleading guides to the subjects of ego-centric facts but are trustworthy indications of their predicates. If the Logical Construction Theory be true, ego-centric sentences misrepresent the structure of the facts which they record in almost every respect.

Evidently the Proper-Name Theory involves reflexive self-prehension, whilst the other theories exclude it. In McTaggart's opinion it is impossible to prove the Proper-Name Theory directly, but it is possible to prove it indirectly by refuting the other two theories which are the only alternatives to it. Thus his argument *for* reflexive self-prehension consists of an argument *against* the Logical Construction Theory and the Disguised Description Theory of ego-centric facts. We



will now consider in turn his attempted refutations of these two theories.

2.22. *Attempted Refutation of the Logical Construction Theory.* McTaggart does not explicitly distinguish this type of theory from what I have called the "Disguised Description Theory". But he does state and try to refute two theories which are different forms of the Logical Construction Theory, as defined by me. These are Hume's Bundle Theory and the theory that ego-centric facts are really about certain relations between experiences and living organisms. I will call the latter the "Somatocentric Theory". McTaggart treats these as forms of the Descriptive Theory; but, unless "descriptive" is used simply to mean "not involving reflexive self-prehension", this classification is unsatisfactory. For it slurs over the following essential difference. If what I have called the "Disguised Description Theory" be true, there *is* a characteristic of selfhood which is capable of belonging to particulars, and there *are* certain particulars which have this characteristic. What is denied is simply that any such particular ever prehends itself as a self. But, if the Bundle Theory or the Somatocentric Theory be true, there are no particulars which have selfhood. All sentences which, by their verbal form, would seem to imply that there are such particulars are philosophically misleading records of facts which require a quite different analysis. Therefore I count these theories as forms of the Logical Construction Theory.

2.221. *The Bundle Theory.* McTaggart discusses this in §§388 and 389 of *The Nature of Existence*. I think that the fairest way of stating the general form of all possible Bundle Theories is the following. Consider the ego-centric fact which a person records by uttering the sentence "I am having the experience  $x$ ." According to the Bundle Theory the fact which this person knows and thus records would be more properly expressed by his saying: "Certain experiences,  $u$ ,  $v$ ,  $w$ , etc., are interconnected by a certain relation  $S$ , and this experience  $x$  is related to these experiences by that relation." To be able to know such a fact the person concerned would, no doubt, need toprehend the particulars  $u$ ,  $v$ ,  $w$ , etc., as experiences,



beside prehending the particular  $x$  as an experience. But he would not be prehending any particular as a self. Nor would he be thinking of any characteristic  $C$ , and knowing with respect to it that one and only one particular has it and that this particular owns the experience  $x$ .

Now McTaggart's argument against the Bundle Theory consists in a challenge to its upholders to mention any relation  $S$  that will answer their purpose. The conditions which any successful candidate must fulfil include the following. Consider four experiences  $x$ ,  $y$ ,  $w$ , and  $z$ , such that  $x$  and  $y$  belong to a single self,  $w$  and  $z$  belong to a single self, but  $x$  and  $y$  do not belong to the same self as  $w$  and  $z$ . We know that there are sets of four experiences answering to this description. Therefore the relation  $S$  must be such that, in all such cases, it *does* relate  $x$  and  $y$  and *does* relate  $w$  and  $z$  but *does not* relate either  $x$  or  $y$  to either  $w$  or  $z$ . McTaggart proposes a number of relations for consideration, viz., spatial contiguity, temporal contiguity, similarity, cause-and-effect, and the relation of a cognition to its object. And he tries to show that none of these would fulfil the condition. He concludes that there is no *direct* relation between *experiences* such that to say of two experiences that they "belong to the same self" is to say that they stand in this relation to each other. If this is so, the Bundle Theory collapses.

The following remarks may be made on this argument: (a) It has a formal defect. Even if each of the relations which McTaggart mentions were separately incapable of fulfilling the conditions, it does not follow that no combination of them could do so. This would need an independent investigation.

(b) The relation might very well be unique even if it be direct. Or, what is more likely, it might be a complex relation containing one or more unique constituents. By "unique constituents" I mean relations which do not relate anything but experiences. It will be noted that, of the five relations which McTaggart proposes for consideration, the first probably could not relate experiences at all, and the next three can and do relate terms which are not experiences as well as

terms which are experiences. It is only the fifth of his proposed relations, viz., that of a cognition to its object, which must have an experience for at least one of its terms. But even here the other term need not be an experience; for the object of a cognition may be of any kind. I am always very suspicious of these challenges to people to name the relation which they allege to be present in a certain case. If it is one that does not occur in other cases, or if it contains as a factor such a relation, any name that they give will necessarily be a mere synonym for one that they have already used; and then they will be unfairly accused of logical circularity.

I think it would be quite open to an upholder of the Bundle Theory to make the following answer to McTaggart and then leave the next move to him. "There is no other name for the relation which I have in mind except the phrase *belonging-to-the-same-self*. Certainly this phrase suggests that the relation is not direct, but is derived, like the relation of brotherhood, from the relations which the two experiences have to a third term which is not an experience. But the suggestions of language in such matters are not to be taken as conclusive. Consider, e.g., the relation between three points which we denote by the phrase *lying-on-the-same-straight-line*. Here language again suggests that the relation is not direct, but is derived from the relations which the three points have to a fourth term which is not a point. But here we happen to have another way of stating the facts, viz., to say that the points are collinear with each other. And it is not in the least obvious that collinearity is not a direct relation between points alone. If some phrase like 'sympsychie' were invented, and became as common in psychology as 'collinear' is in geometry, the argument would cease to carry any conviction."

(c) The above geometrical analogy should remind us that we might easily do an injustice to the Bundle Theory by taking too simple-minded and restricted a view about relations. We have no right to assume that the relation *S* in the Bundle Theory must be a *dyadic* relation. The relation of collinearity, e.g., is *triadic*; for the minimum sensible state-

ment in which its name occurs is of the form "The point  $x$  is collinear with the points  $y$  and  $z$ ." When we want to say that a certain point  $x$  lies on a certain straight line we have to mention *two* points, e.g.,  $a$  and  $b$ , and say that  $x$  is collinear with  $a$  and  $b$ . Similarly, it is quite consistent with the Bundle Theory that the relation of being sympsychic should be at least triadic, i.e., that the minimum sensible statement in which its name occurs should be of the form "The experience  $x$  is sympsychic with the experiences  $y$  and  $z$ ." Suppose that this were the case. Then, if we want to say that a certain experience occurs in a certain self, we shall have to mention *two* other experiences, e.g.,  $a$  and  $b$ , and say that  $x$  is sympsychic with  $a$  and  $b$ .

If the relation  $S$  in the Bundle Theory were triadic or of a higher degree of polyadicity, it would still be a direct relation between experiences and not an indirect relation compounded out of the relations of experiences to something which is not an experience. But it would not be direct in the sense of relating experiences *by pairs*. There is nothing in the Bundle Theory to require that it should be direct in the second sense, though it is of the essence of the theory that it should be direct in the first sense.

(d) The analogy between experiences and points, and between belonging to the same self and lying on the same straight line, is adequate for the limited purpose which I had in view in paragraphs (b) and (c) above. But it must not be pressed too far. It breaks down, e.g., in the following way. Every point lies on an infinite number of straight lines, whereas it is commonly believed that every experience belongs to one self and no experience to more than one. It is, however, quite easy to give a geometrical analogy to this situation. Let us compare experiences, not with points in general, but with points on the surface of a certain cylinder. And let us compare the property of belonging to a self with the property of lying on one of the generators of the cylinder, i.e., one of the straight lines that exist on its surface. Every point on such a surface falls on one generator, and no point on the surface falls on more than one generator. Here, then,

the analogy is formally perfect. Any two points on the surface fall either on the same generator or on different generators, just as any two experiences belong either to the same self or to different selves.

(e) Among the relations which McTaggart suggested and dismissed as inadequate to fulfil the needs of the Bundle Theory were that of cause to effect and that of cognition to cognised object. Certainly, in their unrestricted form, these relations will not fill the bill. But determinate forms of these relations may well be factors in the relation *S* which the Bundle Theory requires. *Prima facie*, e.g., experiences in the same self affect each other *directly*, whilst experiences in different selves affect each other only indirectly through the intermediacy of physiological and physical processes, such as speech, gesture, and writing. Again, *prima facie* an experience in a certain self may be a prehension of another experience *in the same self*, but cannot be a prehension of an experience in another self. I would not, however, lay too much stress on these points. Even if these *prima facie* appearances be correct, such direct causation and such reflexive prehension do not suffice to constitute bundles of the kind required. And it is quite possible that direct causation and the relation of cognition to cognised object may at times relate an experience in one self to an experience in another.

(f) I think that the upshot of the discussion is as follows. McTaggart has certainly not refuted the Bundle Theory, and it is ridiculous to suppose that one could do so by just mentioning four or five familiar dyadic relations and showing that none of them separately will answer the conditions which the relation *S* must fulfil. A very little reflexion has been enough to show us that even so simple and abstract a subject-matter as geometry can supply us with examples of direct relations between points which have the formal properties required of the relation *S*. It is therefore very rash to assume that there cannot be any direct relation among experiences which would have these formal properties.

2.2211. *Relation of the Bundle Theory to McTaggart's Theory.* It is obvious that McTaggart's own theory of the



self is, in certain respects, very much more like the Bundle Theory than many other theories on this subject are. Before leaving the Bundle Theory it will be worth while to consider how far this resemblance extends.

(i) The following theory has been held, in one form or another, by many philosophers. All the experiences of a single self contain, as a common part, factor, or constituent, a certain one persistent or timeless particular. What makes a certain set of simultaneous and successive experiences to be experiences of a single self is their common relation to one such particular. Corresponding to every different group of sympsychic experiences there is a different persistent or timeless particular of this kind. Let us call such particulars "Pure Egos". This theory is so far purely ontological. But it has often been accompanied by the following epistemological theory. When a self  $S$  is conscious of itself this consists in the occurrence of an experience which (*a*) contains the Pure Ego  $E_s$  as a part, factor, or constituent, and (*b*) is in some sense a prehension of  $E_s$ . On some forms of the theory,  $E_s$  is prehended on such occasions directly and as a Pure Ego. On other forms of the theory what is primarily prehended on such occasions is an *experience* which in fact contains  $E_s$  as a part, factor, or constituent; and this experience is prehended as containing  $E_s$ . So it may be said that  $E_s$  is prehended secondarily but not primarily. Evidently the epistemological theory entails the ontological theory, but the converse does not hold. But a person who rejected the epistemological theory might say that there is, for that reason, no direct evidence for the ontological theory. Now McTaggart and the Bundle Theorists agree in rejecting both the ontological theory of Pure Egos and the particular theory of self-consciousness which entails it and often accompanies it.

(ii) The Bundle Theory, when properly enunciated, holds that there are particulars which are experiences, and denies that there are particulars which are selves. It holds that all statements which seem, by their verbal form, to contain proper names or exclusive descriptions of *selves* can and should be replaced by statements in which no such words or



phrases occur. The amended statements will contain only names or descriptions of *experiences* and of certain direct relations between them. They will, it is held, record the same facts as the original statements; and will present a more accurate picture of the components and structure of the facts recorded.

Now McTaggart's theory, both in its unqualified and in its qualified form, holds that there are particulars which are selves beside particulars which are experiences. And, at any rate in its unqualified form, it holds that any sentence by which a person records an ego-centric fact contains a word which *really is* a proper name of a self. Even in its qualified form it would hold that many sentences contain phrases which *really are* exclusive descriptions of selves. On this fundamental point there is complete disagreement between McTaggart's theory and the Bundle Theory.

(iii) But the Bundle Theory seldom has been properly enunciated. For it is only of recent years, and only through the patience and acuteness of Prof. Moore and Mr Wisdom, that we have learned how to enunciate such theories. It would often be said that the Bundle Theory holds that there are selves, and that each self is a complex particular composed of contemporary and successive experiences inter-related in certain characteristic ways. I have often talked thus myself; and should, no doubt, have continued to do so if I had not been lucky enough to have colleagues who can teach me to do better.

Now, if the Bundle Theory be enunciated in this incorrect way, it seems to bear a very strong likeness to McTaggart's theory. For, according to McTaggart, each self, as it really is, is a peculiar kind of complex particular; and each of its experiences, as it really is, is a certain kind of part of it. And every part of a self is either one of its experiences, or a part of one of them, or a group each member of which is an experience or a part of one. So, from an ontological point of view, McTaggart's theory would be a form of the Bundle Theory if the latter were enunciated in this incorrect but quite usual way.

(iv) But the Bundle Theory, even when thus enunciated, would differ *epistemologically* from McTaggart's theory in its unqualified form. The Bundle Theory, thus interpreted, says that certain bundles of suitably inter-related experiences are selves. It says that some such bundles contain experiences which are prehensions of other *experiences* belonging to the same bundle. But it denies that any such bundle contains experiences which are prehensions of *the bundle itself* as a single complex whole. McTaggart's theory, in its unqualified form, holds that some of these bundles contain experiences which are prehensions of the *bundle itself* as a single complex whole. Now this would, no doubt, be a preposterous view to hold if time were ultimately real. For any such bundle would include experiences of all dates from the person's birth to the present moment of his life, and it would still be continually growing through the addition of further experiences as life went on. As the ordinary Bundle Theorist is a simple-minded person with a desire to be hard-headed and "scientific" and to have no "metaphysical nonsense", he never doubts the reality of time. Therefore it would be preposterous for him to try to combine this view of self-consciousness with his ontological view of the self. But such a combination is not necessarily absurd for a person who holds McTaggart's view about time. For him these bundles do not really consist of simultaneous and successive experiences, stretching from birth to the present, and incomplete until death. They appear *sub specie temporis* to do so, but this appearance is largely delusive. Really each such bundle is a timeless whole, and the experiences in it are timeless parts. Certain non-temporal relations between these parts are misprehended as sequence, simultaneity, and becoming. Now it is not ridiculous to suggest that certain timeless parts of a certain timeless whole might be prehensions of that whole as such. We are always liable to be unjust to McTaggart if we fail to interpret what he says at an earlier stage in his exposition in the light of the fuller knowledge which is supplied at later stages.

(v) I am inclined to think that the qualified form of McTaggart's theory would differ very little, even epistemo-

logically, from the Bundle Theory as it has been commonly and carelessly enunciated. It seems to me that the qualified form of McTaggart's theory would have to deny that any of these bundles ever contains an experience which is a prehension of the bundle as a unitary whole. So far as prehension is concerned the only difference would be this. McTaggart's qualified theory would hold that some such bundles contain experiences which are prehensions of the content of a *complete specious present* as a unitary whole. A Bundle Theorist like Hume might hold that they contain no such experiences; at most they contain experiences which are prehensions of other experiences which are *parts* of the content of a complete specious present. The difference is not very profound. There seems no reason why a Bundle Theorist should not agree with McTaggart on this point.

I have suggested that the proper complement of the qualified theory is to hold that, in *prehending* the content of a specious present, one *perceptually accepts* it as a thin slice of the history of one's self, and thus "perceives" one's self in the only sense in which one perceives any continuant even on the most naively realistic view of sense-perception. But McTaggart does not develop the qualified theory in this way. And, if he did, it would not distinguish the qualified theory from a Bundle Theory. For there is no reason why any Bundle Theorist should not develop his own form of Bundle Theory in this way.

2.222. *The Somatocentric Theory*. McTaggart thinks that he has refuted the Bundle Theory and has established the following proposition. The relation between two experiences, which we express by saying that they both belong to the same self, is not a direct relation between experiences and them only. It is a relation, like that of brother and sister, which is derived from the relations in which both experiences stand to some term which is not an experience. This conclusion is, however, consistent with the view that this other term is not a self. The Somatocentric Theory suggests that it is a certain living organism, or a certain part of one, e.g., its brain or what a human percipient would take as its brain.

McTaggart discusses this suggestion in §§390 and 391 of *The Nature of Existence*. The beginning of his argument may be put as follows. Suppose that a person at a certain time makes a judgment which he would express by saying "I am angry", and suppose that this judgment is true. Each of us knows perfectly well that such judgments are made and that some of them are true. If the judgment is true, there are *two* simultaneous experiences occurring, viz., the experience of making the judgment and the experience of feeling angry. Moreover, if the judgment is true, these two experiences must *belong to the same self*.

Now there is nothing that I wish to question in the argument up to this point. But we come now to a step which ought not to be taken thoughtlessly. McTaggart constantly writes as if he held the following proposition to be self-evident: "Anyone who judges that he is having a certain experience is *ipso facto* judging that this judgment and this experience belong to the same self." Thus, e.g., anyone who judges that he is angry is *ipso facto* judging that this introspective judgment and this angry feeling belong to the same self. It is easy to give quotations in support of this account of McTaggart's views. At the top of p. 65 of *The Nature of Existence* he says "...the judgment 'I am aware of X' always means that the person who is aware of X is also the person who is making the judgment." Again, at the bottom of p. 68 and the top of p. 69 he says: "...when I assert the proposition 'I have this awareness' it means that the self who has this awareness is the same as the self who asserts this proposition." Lastly, at the end of the first paragraph on p. 74 he says: "...in asserting 'I was envious yesterday' I am asserting that the envy and the judgment belong to the same self."

All the sentences which I have just quoted are, no doubt, somewhat ambiguous. They are all, no doubt, susceptible of the following mild interpretation: "If anyone judges that he is having a certain experience, his judgment cannot be true unless this judgment and that experience both belong to the same self." But I do not think that this is the natural inter-



pretation to put on any of them; and I should regard it as a rather strained interpretation to put on the third of them, which actually occurs in §390 in the course of the argument against the Somatocentric Theory. I think that the natural interpretation for all of them is the following: "If anyone judges that he is having a certain experience, he is *ipso facto* judging that this judgment and this experience belong to the same self."

Now the principle, in its milder interpretation, is obviously true. But it does not entail the principle in its stronger interpretation. Let us take a geometrical example to show this. If anyone judges that there are plane figures of exactly similar shape but of different areas, his judgment cannot be true unless Euclid's parallel postulate is true. But it is obvious that a person may be judging that there are plane figures of exactly similar shape and of different areas without *ipso facto* judging (or even thinking about) Euclid's parallel postulate.

When the stronger interpretation is put on the principle, there is no reason to believe it to be true and there is strong reason to think that it is false. If it were true, every ego-centric judgment would be *identical with* or *necessarily accompanied by* a certain judgment *about itself*. The first alternative is nonsensical, and I know of no reason to accept the second. So far as my own introspection can inform me, I quite often make judgments like "I am angry" without at the same time making a judgment like "This judgment and this feeling of anger belong to the same self."

The utmost that I could admit in this direction is the following. It is immediately obvious that the judgment "I am having such and such an experience" could not be true unless this judgment and this experience belonged to the same self. Therefore any circumstance which led the maker of an ego-centric judgment to doubt that the judgment and the experience belong to the same self would *ipso facto* make him doubt the truth of his ego-centric judgment. Whether the principle, in this latter form, is strong enough for McTaggart's purposes remains to be seen.



We can now continue McTaggart's argument against the Somatocentric Theory. There is no doubt that at this stage it uses as a premise the principle which we have been discussing, in its stronger and doubtful form.

The argument continues as follows. Anyone who judges that he is angry is *ipso facto* judging that this judgment and this feeling of anger belong to the same self. Suppose, if possible, that the proposition that two experiences belong to the same self *means* that they both stand in a certain relation *R* to a certain organism or to a certain part of one. Then a person could not even *entertain the thought* that he is angry unless he were thinking of this relation *R* and this organism or this part of it. And he would have no reason to *believe* that he is angry unless he had reason to believe that the belief and the feeling do in fact both stand in this relation to this term. Thus the relation *R* would have to fulfil the following conditions. (a) When and only when two experiences belong to the same self, it relates both of them to a certain organism or to a certain part of one. (b) Whenever anyone thinks of himself as having a certain experience he is thinking of this experience as related by this relation to a certain organism or to a certain part of one. And (c) whenever anyone believes himself to be having a certain experience he is believing that this belief and this experience are related by this relation to a certain organism or a certain part of it. Finally, McTaggart issues the usual challenge to upholders of the Somatocentric Theory to mention any relation *R* which answers these conditions; and makes the usual assumption that they will fail to meet the challenge, and that such failure shows the theory to be baseless.

The only relation suggested by McTaggart is that of being immediately determined by a contemporary event in a certain brain. He has no difficulty in showing that many a man has entertained the proposition that he is angry without thinking of this causal relation between the experience of anger and an event in a brain. Again, many a man has believed that he is angry without believing that this relation subsists between the experience of anger and any event in a

brain. Lastly, it would be admitted that a person often *knows* or *unhesitatingly believes* that he is angry; whilst the proposition that this feeling is immediately determined by a contemporary event in a certain brain is at best a consequence of a general theory for which there is supposed to be fairly decent inductive evidence.

I will now make some comments on this attempted refutation of the Somatocentric Theory. (a) I will first admit for the moment the premise that anyone who judges that he is angry is *ipso facto* judging that this judgment and a feeling of anger belong to one and the same self. Even so I think that McTaggart has made the theory look needlessly ridiculous by choosing as the one relation for discussion a relation which could not possibly fill the bill. Obviously no relation which is thought about only by scientists and by those who read their books, and which is believed to hold only because of a general theory based on induction, could possibly fulfil the conditions. We must remember, however, that plain men think that they perceive by means of organic sensations certain events which happen in their own bodies; that they hear their own voices; and so on. Suppose I were to suggest that, when a man judges that he is angry, he is judging that *this feeling* is associated with contemporary palpitations in a certain inner part of a *certain organism*, and that *this judgment* is being expressed by sounds which are issuing simultaneously from the mouth of *the same organism*. My suggestion might well be refutable; but it certainly could not be refuted by the cheap and easy arguments by which McTaggart disposes of his suggestion.

(b) As I have said above, I cannot accept McTaggart's premise as it stands. The farthest that I could go in that direction is to accept the following proposition: "Any circumstance which would lead the maker of an ego-centric judgment to doubt that the judgment and the experience referred to in it belong to the same self would *ipso facto* make him doubt the truth of the ego-centric judgment, if his attention were called to the point." Could McTaggart's argument be restated without using his own very doubtful premise?

(c) I do not believe that either his premise or the weaker one which I am willing to accept is really necessary to his argument. I should suppose that the argument could be restated as follows. If the Somatocentric Theory is true, anyone who judges that he is angry is judging that a feeling of anger stands in a certain relation  $R$  to a certain organism or to a certain part of one. The challenge can be issued at this point without more ado. The supporter of the theory can be challenged to mention any relation with regard to which it is at all plausible to make the following assertion: "When and only when a person is judging that he is having a certain experience he is thinking of *this* relation and is judging that *it* relates this experience to a certain organism or a certain part of one."

(d) The amended premise, mentioned in paragraph (b) above, would be useful in testing relations put forward in answer to this challenge. Suppose that  $A$  maintains that, when he judges that he is angry, he is judging that a feeling of anger stands in a certain relation  $R$  to a certain organism or a certain part of one.  $A$  could be made to admit that this judgment cannot be true unless it and the feeling referred to in it belong to one and the same self. He could then be made to admit that, if his analysis of the judgment is correct, the judgment and the feeling cannot belong to the same self unless they *both* stand in the relation  $R$  to the *same* organism or the *same* part of the same organism. Finally, you might be able to get  $A$  to admit that he is *not certain* that this condition is fulfilled and yet he is *quite certain* that he is angry. If so, he will have to admit that he was mistaken in his analysis of the judgment that he is angry. He may then propound other analyses of the same type with a different relation. But they can all be tested by the same method, and it may be that they will all fail to pass the test. If so,  $A$  has only two alternatives. One is to drop the Somatocentric Theory altogether. The other is to admit that, if the Somatocentric Theory is true, he is quite unable to indicate the relation which is involved in it.

2.23. *Attempted Refutation of the Disguised Description*

*Theory.* If this theory is true, a person who makes an ego-centric judgment is never prehending his self as a self and is never using "I" as a proper name in the logical sense. He is always, on such occasions, thinking of a certain characteristic *C*, which may be simple or complex. And the judgment which he makes when he says "I am having such and such an experience" would be more properly expressed by saying "There is one and only one particular which has the characteristic *C*, and this experience belongs to it." It is evident that no judgment of this kind could be certain unless the person who made it were sure that *C* is an exclusive description of a certain particular. So the first question that arises is whether a person does know of any characteristic about which he can be sure that it belongs to one and only one self.

2.231. *Exclusive Descriptions of Selves.* McTaggart discusses this question in §§384 to 386, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*. On his view an exclusive description of a self can be reached in the following way. Take any experience which a person prehends. On McTaggart's view it is self-evident (a) that every experience belongs to *some* self, and (b) that no experience belongs to *more than one* self. Therefore the characteristic of *being a self which owns this experience* can be known to be an exclusive description of a certain particular. And a person who prehends this experience can think of this characteristic, provided that he has the idea of selfhood and of the occurrent-continuant relation or tie.

There is another suggested characteristic, which McTaggart rejects as not being certainly an exclusive description of a self. We might, as before, start with an experience which a person prehends. And we might suggest that one and the same experience cannot be prehended by more than one self, viz., the self who owns it. If this were certain, we could say that the property of *being a self which prehends this experience* can be known to be an exclusive description of a certain particular. But McTaggart, as we know, holds that it is not inconceivable that one and the same experience should be prehended by several selves. So he is not prepared to accept



this characteristic as one which is certainly an exclusive description of a self.

2.232. *The Argument.* Although McTaggart holds that only one of the two proposed descriptions is certainly exclusive, he gives the second the benefit of the doubt and discusses both of them. The argument is in principle the same in both cases. He takes first the property of *being a self which prehends this experience*, and, assuming for the moment that it is certainly an exclusive description, he develops his argument in §383. In §386 he takes the property of *being a self which owns this experience*, which he admits to be certainly an exclusive description, and develops a similar argument about it. I propose to take the two properties in the opposite order.

The essential point of his argument is to show that, if a person knew himself *only* as the self which answers to a description of one or other of these two kinds, he could not know any ego-centric fact or have reason to believe any ego-centric proposition. On the other hand, if a person prehended himself, he could know ego-centric facts and he would have reason to believe ego-centric propositions. Since it is admitted that we do know such facts and do have reason to believe such propositions, McTaggart concludes that the Disguised Description Theory must be rejected and the Proper-Name Theory accepted.

McTaggart's arguments in §§383 and 386 make use of the principle which I discussed and rejected in Sub-section 2.222 of the present chapter. The principle is that, if anyone judges that he is having a certain experience, he is *ipso facto* judging that this judgment and this experience belong to the same self. If the argument really needs this premise, it must be rejected; but it remains to be seen whether a somewhat similar argument could be constructed without this premise. I will begin with McTaggart's argument in my own words.

(i) Suppose that, when I say that I am angry, I mean that the owner of *this* experience is the owner of a feeling of anger; where *this* experience is one that I am prehending at the time. For the present purpose it does not matter whether the pre-



hended experience which is used in the exclusive description of my self is the feeling of anger referred to in the judgment or is some other experience, e.g., a twinge of toothache.

According to McTaggart, in judging that I am angry I am *ipso facto* judging that this judgment and this feeling of anger belong to one and the same self. On the present theory this means that I am judging that the self which owns *this* experience also owns this judgment and this feeling of anger. Now, even if *this* experience is the feeling of anger itself, there are still *two* experiences to be considered, one of which is used in describing the self and the other of which is asserted to be owned by the self thus described. Now the question is this. Supposing it to be true that the self which makes this judgment and the self which has this angry feeling are one and the same particular, how could I possibly know this or have reason to believe it if I knew my self *only* by description? If I *prehended* my self, I might apprehend it as having the two characteristics of making this judgment and having this feeling; just as I may apprehend a certain visual sensum as both red and square. There would then be no difficulty. But we are assuming that I *never* apprehend my self.

There is no logical connexion between these two characteristics, as there is, e.g., between being an equilateral triangle and being equiangular. It is not the case that anything which had a feeling of anger would necessarily make a judgment that it felt angry, or conversely. So the proposition that the self which makes this judgment and the self which has this feeling are one and the same particular could not be known in the way in which one could know, of an admittedly equilateral triangle, that it is also equiangular, without needing to inspect it. And there seems to be no other way in which one could know or rationally conjecture that a certain pair of characteristics co-inhere in a particular which cannot be apprehended. Yet many ego-centric judgments are quite certain; and they are clearly not the products of inference, making use of general principles whether *a priori* or empirical. In order to explain this fact we must, then, admit that a self can *prehend itself* as well as its experiences.

I think that the above is a fair statement of McTaggart's argument. I will now make some comments on it. (a) I do not think that there is any logical fallacy in the reasoning, and I accept all the premises but one. The premise which I reject is, of course, the principle that anyone who judges that he is having a certain experience is *ipso facto* judging that this experience and this judgment belong to one and the same self.

(b) This premise is essential to McTaggart's argument for the following reason. It is essential for him to show that anyone who makes an ego-centric judgment is *ipso facto* asserting of at least *two* experiences that they both belong to one and the same self. His principle ensures this. For the judgment itself and the experience referred to in it are certainly two experiences; and the principle asserts that anyone who makes the judgment is judging that the judgment and the experience referred to in it belong to the same self.

(c) The weaker form of the principle, which I accept, would not be strong enough for McTaggart's purpose here. I am prepared to admit as obvious the principle that, if anyone judges that he is having a certain experience, then his judgment *cannot be true* unless it and the experience to which it refers belong to the same self. And I admit that, if the Disguised Description Theory be true, it is difficult to see any direct way in which a person could know or have reason to believe, with regard to two experiences, that they both belonged to the same self. But, with the weaker form of the principle, we are no longer entitled to say that what a person who makes an ego-centric judgment is knowing or believing is that this judgment and the experience referred to in it are owned by the same self.

(d) Let us consider what could be done with the argument if we leave out this premise altogether. Let us suppose, if possible, that the form of Disguised Description Theory under discussion is true. Then, when I judge that I am angry, I am judging that the owner of *this* experience is the owner of a feeling of anger; where *this* experience is one that I am pre-hending at the time. Now either the experience which is used

in exclusively describing my self is the feeling of anger referred to in the judgment, or it is some other experience. Let us consider these two alternatives.

Let us first suppose that it is some other experience, e.g., a certain twinge of toothache. Then the latter part of McTaggart's argument can be applied at once. For now what I am judging is that the self which owns this twinge of toothache also owns an angry feeling. And, if I *never* apprehend my self, but know my self *only* by description, it seems impossible to explain how I can know or have strong reason to believe that the two properties of owning this twinge of toothache and owning an angry feeling belong to a single unapprehended particular.

Let us next suppose that the experience which is used in exclusively describing my self is the feeling of anger referred to in the judgment. Then what I am judging is that the owner of *this* experience (viz., this angry feeling) is owning an angry feeling. To put it in another way. On this alternative, whenever a person judges that he is feeling angry, he is apprehending a certain particular as a feeling of anger, and is judging that there is one and only one particular which owns this feeling and that it is a self. McTaggart's argument could not attack this form of the theory without using the premise which we have rejected. But might one not say that the analysis of ego-centric judgments given by this form of the theory is obviously wrong? Might it not be said that, whatever I am doing when I judge that I am feeling angry, I am not simply apprehending a certain particular as a feeling of anger and judging that there is one and only one self which owns it? If so, we could say that, of the two alternative forms which the theory under discussion could take, one can be rejected at once by direct inspection and the other can be refuted by McTaggart's argument.

(e) I think, however, that the best and safest way of modifying McTaggart's argument would be as follows. Judgments are often made which the assertor expresses by a sentence of the form "I am having a certain experience and a certain other experience." An example would be "I am thinking of

the Albert Memorial and feeling a twinge of toothache." Many such judgments are made with complete certainty, and there is no reason to doubt that most of them are true. Now suppose that the form of Disguised Description Theory which we are discussing were correct. Then anyone who makes such a judgment is asserting, about a particular which he *can never apprehend*, that the two properties of owning this thought of the Albert Memorial and owning this feeling of toothache both belong to it. Now either he uses one of these properties in the exclusive description by which he thinks of his self; or he uses neither of them, but uses instead the property of owning some third experience which he prehends.

On the first alternative it is impossible to see how he can be sure that the property which he does not use in the description belongs to the particular which he describes by means of the other property. On the second alternative it is impossible to see how he can be sure that the property of owning this thought of the Albert Memorial and the property of owning this feeling of toothache *both* belong to the particular which is described by *neither of them* but by the property of owning some third experience. Since ego-centric judgments of the kind which we have been considering *are* often made with almost complete certainty, and since the form of Disguised Description Theory under discussion is unable to explain how this is possible, that form of the theory may be rejected.

(ii) We can now consider the attempt to give an exclusive description of one's self by means of the property of prehending a certain particular. McTaggart's argument against this form of the Disguised Description Theory will be found in §383 of *The Nature of Existence*. I will state it in my own way.

There are certain particulars which are commonly held to be essentially "private", i.e., not prehensible by more than one self. Many people would hold that sensibilia are particulars of this kind. And most people would hold that a person's experiences of thinking, willing, feeling emotion, etc., are prehensible by no one but himself. Let us confine our attention to experiences, and let us assume for the sake of



argument that they are essentially private particulars, in the sense described above.

Suppose that a person makes the second-order ego-centric judgment which he expresses by saying "I am aware of desiring tea." (It is important to notice that the present argument is concerned with *second-order* judgments, and not with a first-order ego-centric judgment such as would be expressed by the sentence "I am desiring tea." If anyone doubts that these are two different judgments, he should remind himself that it is quite sensible and not uncommon to make such a remark as "I must have been desiring tea for some time past, but I have only just become aware of desiring it.") Then, according to McTaggart, he is *ipso facto* judging that this judgment and the state of introspective awareness referred to in it belong to one and the same self. Suppose that the maker of the judgment never prehends his self, and that he describes his self by the property of prehending this desire. Then, in judging that he is aware of desiring tea, he is *ipso facto* judging that the property of making this judgment belongs to the particular which he knows only descriptively as the prehender of this desire. We then raise the old question. How can a person know or have reason to believe, with regard to a particular which he *never* prehends, that it has a certain empirical characteristic not conveyed by the characteristic which he uses to describe it? The answer, as before, is that he cannot. And so the theory under discussion fails to account for the fact that a person can know or have good reason to believe such propositions as he would express by saying "I am aware of desiring tea." It may therefore be rejected.

I will now make some comments on this argument. (a) Of course I cannot accept it as it stands. For it uses the premise that anyone who judges that he is aware of a certain experience is *ipso facto* judging that this judgment and this awareness belong to the same self. I reject this premise. I admit that, if a person makes such a judgment, it *cannot be true* unless it and the awareness to which it refers belong to the same self. But this is not enough for McTaggart's purpose. In order to make an opening for his attack he has to



show that anyone who judges that he is aware of a certain experience is *ipso facto* asserting of at least *two* experiences that they both belong to the same self. His premise, which I reject, would ensure this. The weaker form of this premise, which I accept, does not ensure it.

(b) What would happen if we were to drop this premise altogether? Let us suppose, if possible, that the form of Disguised Description Theory under discussion is true. Then, when I judge that I am aware of desiring tea, I am judging that the prehender of *this* experience is aware of desiring tea. Now either the prehended experience which is used in exclusively describing my self is the desire for tea which is referred to in the judgment, or it is some other experience which I prehend. Let us consider these two alternatives.

Let us first suppose that it is some other experience, e.g., a prehended thought of the Albert Memorial. Then the latter part of McTaggart's argument can be applied at once. For now what I am judging is that the self which prehends this thought of the Albert Memorial also prehends a desire for tea. And, if I *never* prehend my self, but know my self *only* by description, it seems impossible to explain how I can know or have good reason to believe the two properties of prehending this thought and prehending this desire belong to a single unprehended particular.

Let us next suppose that the property which is used in exclusively describing my self is the property of prehending the desire referred to in the judgment. Then what I am judging is that the prehender of *this* experience (viz., this desire for tea) is prehending a desire for tea. To put it in another way. On this alternative, whenever a person judges that he is aware of desiring tea, he is prehending a certain particular as such a desire and is judging that there is one and only one particular which prehends this desire and that it is a self. McTaggart's argument could not attack this form of the theory without using the premise which we have rejected. But might one not say that the analysis of second-order ego-centric judgments given by this form of the theory is obviously wrong? Might it not be said that, whatever I am

doing when I judge that I am aware of desiring tea, I am not simply prehending a certain particular as a desire for tea and judging that there is one and only one particular which prehends this desire and that it is a self? If so, we could say that, of the two alternative forms which the theory under discussion could take, one can be rejected at once by direct inspection and the other can be refuted by McTaggart's argument.

(c) Probably the best way of modifying McTaggart's argument would be as follows. Consider the sort of judgment which would be expressed by saying "I am aware of desiring tea and I have a twinge of toothache." Such judgments are often made with complete certainty, and there is no reason to doubt that many of them are true. Now suppose that a self is never prehended, but is known only descriptively as the prehender of such and such an experience. Then anyone who makes such a judgment must be thinking of his self either as the prehender of this desire for tea or as the prehender of some other experience. In either case he is asserting of a particular which he knows only as the *prehender of a certain experience* that it *owns* a certain *other* experience, viz., this twinge of toothache. McTaggart's usual argument can then be applied.

2·24. *Final Estimate of McTaggart's Argument.* (i) I think that McTaggart's argument against the Disguised Description Theory, though not correct as it stands, can easily be so modified as to refute that theory.

(ii) If he had also succeeded in refuting the Logical Construction Theory, we should have been forced to accept the only remaining alternative, viz., the Proper-Name Theory. But he has certainly not refuted that form of the Logical Construction Theory which I have called the "Bundle Theory". Therefore his argument, even when modified to meet obvious criticisms, fails to establish the Proper-Name Theory.

(iii) As I have pointed out in Sub-section 2·11 of this chapter, where I summarised McTaggart's theory of the self, it is doubtful whether he has any right to hold that a self

ever *prehends itself* in view of his qualifications in §§395 and 396. He may still have a right to hold that a self *perceives* itself, in a sense of “perceive” which differs from prehending. In this sense a self might “perceive itself” even if the Logical Construction Theory were true. But, if it perceives itself *only* in this sense, the Proper-Name Theory *cannot* be true. Thus it looks as if McTaggart, in labouring to establish the existence of reflexive self-prehension, was turning his back on the truer and more subtle theory of the self and self-knowledge which he glimpsed for a moment in §§395 and 396, and was reverting to the cruder theory which he unhesitatingly maintains throughout the rest of the book.





## BOOK VII

### THE TRIAL OF OSTENSIBLY EXEMPLIFIED CHARACTERISTICS

Now, Jurymen, take my advice,  
All kinds of vulgar prejudice  
I pray you set aside,  
In stern judicial frame of mind  
From bias free of every kind  
This trial must be tried!

*Trial by Jury*

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#### ARGUMENT OF BOOK VII

In this Book we consider in turn the most important characteristics which are ostensibly exemplified in the universe, and test them by McTaggart's principles to see whether they are or are not delusive.

In Chap. xxxi the tests of Endless Divisibility and Determining Correspondence are applied to Ostensible Selfhood and Ostensible Prehension. A distinction is drawn between two kinds of prehensions, which we call " $\omega$ -Prehensions" and " $r$ -Prehensions". It is shown that it is possible for there to be a determining-correspondence hierarchy in which the primary whole is a society of selves; the primary parts are these selves; the secondary parts are  $\omega$ -prehensions in these selves of themselves, of each other, and of their own and each other's  $\omega$ -prehensions; and the determining-correspondence relation is that of an  $\omega$ -prehension to its object. In this chapter we also expound and discuss McTaggart's argument to prove that every  $\omega$ -prehension is a prehension of its object *as a self* or an  $\omega$ -prehension, as the case may be, and is therefore, to this extent at least, correct.

In Chap. xxxii we consider, and reject, McTaggart's

attempt to show that there can be no non-prehensive cogitations, and that all ostensibly non-prehensive cogitations must therefore really be misprehended prehensions.

In Chap. xxxiii we explain and discuss the argument by which McTaggart professes to show that nothing which had the properties of being a *sensum* or being a material object could fulfil the two conditions of Endless Divisibility and Determining Correspondence. We show that this is a mistake on McTaggart's part, by constructing a theory of extended objects which would enable them to fulfil the conditions.

In Chap. xxxiv we explain McTaggart's form of Mentalism, and point out some of its likenesses and unlikenesses to the Mentalism of Leibniz. We then consider in turn its general consequences and its effects on certain alternatives which McTaggart has so far left open.

Chap. xxxv, which ends the Book, is concerned with *Ostensible Temporality*. It begins with an independent account of the phenomenology of Time; passes on to an exposition and criticism of McTaggart's views on this topic; and ends by stating and refuting McTaggart's argument to prove that temporal characteristics are delusive.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### OSTENSIBLE SELFHOOD AND OSTENSIBLE PREHENSION

As we have seen, McTaggart holds that each of us prehends a certain particular as a self. Each of us also prehends certain particulars as experiences of prehensive cognition. Since McTaggart holds that there can be and is misprehension, these alleged facts do not, in his opinion, suffice to show that there are selves and that there are prehensions. Selfhood and the characteristic of being a prehension might be delusive characteristics. Is there any ground for thinking that they are? For reasons which will soon appear, these two characteristics stand or fall together.

In trying these and other ostensibly exemplified characteristics McTaggart proceeds on a principle which is analogous to the legal maxim that an accused person is to be deemed innocent unless he can be shown to be guilty. If certain particulars are prehended as having a certain characteristic *C*, then, unless positive evidence can be produced to show that no particular could have *C*, we must assume that *C* is not a delusive characteristic.

Now the first test which must be performed on any ostensibly exemplified characteristic is the following. Every particular must be endlessly divisible in at least one dimension. Therefore any characteristic which ostensibly belongs to particulars must be condemned as delusive if its belonging to a particular would be incompatible with the latter being endlessly divisible in at least one dimension. The second test is closely connected with the first. A particular cannot be endlessly divisible without leading to contradictions unless either (*a*) it is a Super-primary Whole, i.e., it has a set of parts each of which is a Primary Whole; or (*b*) it is a Primary Whole, i.e., a particular which has a set of parts each of which

is a Primary Part in one and the same Determining-Correspondence Hierarchy; or (c) it is a Primary Part in such a hierarchy; or (d) it is a Secondary Part in such a hierarchy; or (e) it has a set of parts each of which falls under one or other of the four previous headings. We may refer to this as the "Determining-Correspondence Condition". So any characteristic which ostensibly belongs to particulars must be condemned as delusive if its belonging to a particular would be incompatible with the latter fulfilling the determining-correspondence condition.

### 1. Application of the Tests.

In order to apply the tests to selves and prehensions it is only necessary to refer back to three passages in the present work.

The first of these is Vol. I, Chap. XXI, Sub-section 2.1. We there gave an example of a state of affairs which would be an instance of a determining-correspondence hierarchy in which the primary parts are two selves, the secondary parts are prehensions, and the relation of determining correspondence is that of prehension to prehended object. We first enumerated four conditions which must be fulfilled by selves and prehension if this is to be possible. They were as follows. (i) That, when a self  $S$  prehends an object  $O$ , there is a particular which (a) is a part of  $S$ , and (b) stands to  $O$  in the relation of prehension to prehended object. (ii) That a self  $S$  can have prehensions of itself and its own prehensions. (iii) That a self  $S$  can have prehensions of other selves and of their prehensions. And (iv) that, if  $\Omega$  be a prehension in  $S$  of an object  $O$ , and if  $o$  be a part of  $O$ , then there can be a part  $\omega$  of  $\Omega$  which is a prehension in  $S$  of  $o$ .

These four conditions were simply *assumed* for the sake of giving an example. No attempt was made at the time to justify them. If the reader will refer to Chap. XXVI in the present volume of this work, he will find McTaggart's attempts to justify assumptions (i), (iii), and (iv) explained and criticised in Sub-sections 1.2, 1.1, and 1.3 respectively. Again, the greater part of Chap. XXX has been devoted to a state-

ment and criticism of McTaggart's attempts to justify assumption (ii).

On pp. 381 and 382 of Vol. I of this work the reader will find enumerated a set of thirteen "rules" for a "mutual admiration society" consisting of two selves  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ . These rules presuppose that the four conditions mentioned above are fulfilled. At the present stage McTaggart claims to have justified the four conditions which the thirteen rules presuppose. Now I showed on pp. 383 to 385 that a mutual admiration society composed of two minds which obeyed these rules would be a determining-correspondence hierarchy in which the two minds were the primary parts. The secondary parts would be the prehensions in these minds of themselves, of each other, and of their own and each other's prehensions. Of course the rules require that each of these prehensions shall have a set of parts each of which is itself a prehension, and so on without end. Is there any objection to this? McTaggart claims to have shown that there is no objection to a particular having parts within parts without end, provided that the determining-correspondence condition is fulfilled. Now this condition is fulfilled here. He also claims to have shown that there is no objection to a prehension having a part which is itself a prehension. If each of these contentions be granted, there seems to be no objection to granting the possibility of their combination. If the parts of a prehension down to a certain stage of division can be prehensions, and if there can be no lowest stage of division, there is no reason to suppose that there will be a stage below which the minuter parts can no longer be prehensions.

So McTaggart concludes that it is possible for there to be a determining-correspondence hierarchy in which the *primary whole* is a society of selves; the *primary parts* are these selves; the *secondary parts* are certain prehensions in these selves of themselves, of each other, and of their own and each other's prehensions; and the *determining-correspondence relation* is that of these prehensions to their objects. It is therefore possible that selves and certain prehensions should pass both the endless-divisibility test and the determining-correspondence test.



1.1.  $\omega$ -Prehensions and  $r$ -Prehensions. At this point I am going to introduce a notation which will be very useful at a later stage, viz., when we have to deal with McTaggart's theory of the timeless series which are misprehended as series of events. I think it is important to mention the distinction which it symbolises at once, lest the reader should acquire certain prepossessions which will have to be shaken when we reach this later stage.

Any prehension which is a secondary part, of any grade, in a determining-correspondence hierarchy such as we have been considering may be called a "determining-correspondence prehension". This is, however, a long and clumsy phrase. I propose to call any such experience an " $\omega$ -prehension". When we come to the question of the timeless series which are misprehended as series of events we shall see that determining-correspondence prehensions always *come at one end* of such series and appear *sub specie temporis* to come at the latter end of time. Therefore the symbol " $\omega$ " seems to be appropriate for them.

Now we must not rashly assume that all prehensions are necessarily  $\omega$ -prehensions. This is the prepossession which I mentioned as likely to be formed in the reader's mind and to give trouble at a later stage. It is quite certain that most of the ostensible prehensions which we can discover by introspection are not *ostensibly*  $\omega$ -prehensions. For many of them are prehensions of particulars as *sensa*, and none of them are prehensions of particulars as other selves or as experiences of other selves. Now the object of an  $\omega$ -prehension is always in fact either the self who owns the prehension, or another self, or an  $\omega$ -prehension in the same or another self. This does not, indeed, suffice to prove that the ordinary everyday prehensions which we introspect are not  $\omega$ -prehensions. For it might be that what is prehended as a *sensum* is really a foreign self or an  $\omega$ -prehension in such a self. But, at any rate, there is a strong *prima facie* case for holding that our ordinary prehensions are not  $\omega$ -prehensions. Moreover, as we shall see in the next section, McTaggart claims to prove that  $\omega$ -prehensions must be prehensions of their objects *as selves* or *as*

$\omega$ -prehensions, as the case may be. If this is so, it is *certain* that the vast majority of our ordinary prehensions cannot be  $\omega$ -prehensions.

I propose to call prehensions which are not  $\omega$ -prehensions "*r*-prehensions". We shall see later that, on McTaggart's theory, all such prehensions occupy *non-final* positions in the timeless series which are misprehended as series of events, and they appear *sub specie temporis* to happen before the end of time. Now such terms of a series are generally symbolised in mathematics by a symbol of the form  $u_r$ . So it seems appropriate to speak of "*r*-prehensions".

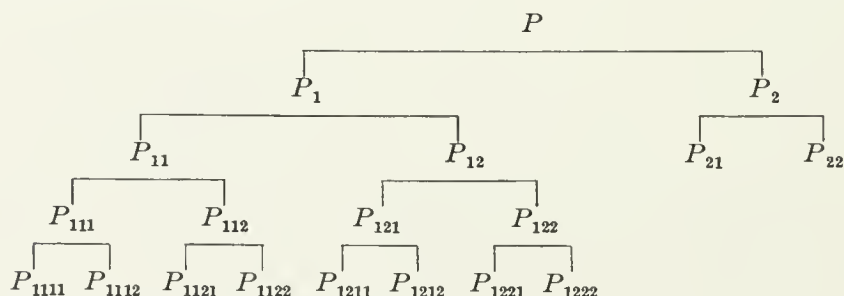
At this point the reader may be inclined to raise the following question. Could any but  $\omega$ -prehensions obey the two conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence? And, if not, how can there be any *r*-prehensions? To answer this question we must anticipate certain doctrines which McTaggart develops in connexion with the series which are misprehended *sub specie temporis* as series of events. Suppose that  $\omega$ -prehensions were divisible in two different dimensions. In one of these they are divisible without end into  $\omega$ -prehensions of lower and lower grades. In the other dimension they are divisible, but not without end. In this dimension they have a number of *simple* parts; though the number may be infinite. This leads to no difficulty, and therefore there is no need for them to form a determining-correspondence hierarchy in this dimension. The suggestion is that *r*-prehensions are certain parts of  $\omega$ -prehensions in that dimension in which  $\omega$ -prehensions are divisible into simple parts. We need not consider here McTaggart's grounds for this theory. It is evidently a possible theory, and it provides an answer to the question about the possibility of *r*-prehensions.

## 2. The Correctness of $\omega$ -Prehensions.

In §§415 to 419, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart undertakes a very elaborate discussion to show that  $\omega$ -prehensions must be correct in certain respects. As we know, the objects of all such prehensions will *in fact* be either

selves or  $\omega$ -prehensions in those selves. But the following question might still be raised. "Must an  $\omega$ -prehension whose object is *in fact* a self be a prehension of that object *as a self*? And must an  $\omega$ -prehension whose object is *in fact* another  $\omega$ -prehension be a prehension of that object *as an*  $\omega$ -prehension? Might not the object fail to be prehended as a self or as an  $\omega$ -prehension, as the case may be? Might it not even be positively misprehended as something quite unlike a self or a prehension?" These are the questions which McTaggart claims to answer in the negative in these sections.

\*I will first try to state the argument without any criticisms, and then I will make such criticisms as seem necessary. It is impossible to follow the argument comfortably without a diagram in front of one. I will therefore reproduce the simplest diagram which will suffice to illustrate the argument. This is Diagram I on p. 384 of Vol. I of the present work. It is not necessary, however, to reproduce the whole of that diagram. I will carry the divisions under  $P_1$  to the third-grade secondary parts; but I will not write down all the corresponding divisions under  $P_2$ , since they are not needed for our present purpose.



In this diagram  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  are two selves which are the primary parts of a certain primary whole  $P$ .  $P_{11}$  is the  $\omega$ -prehension in  $P_1$  of himself.  $P_{12}$  is the  $\omega$ -prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ . Together they constitute the set of first-grade secondary parts of  $P_1$ .  $P_{111}$  is the  $\omega$ -prehension in  $P_1$  of the  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{11}$ .

\* In comparing my form of the argument with McTaggart's the reader will notice that I introduce only two selves,  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ , whilst he introduces four,  $B$ ,  $C$ ,  $D$ , and  $E$ . All the essential points in the argument can be brought out as well with the smaller number of selves, and the diagram is made much simpler.

$P_{112}$  is the  $\omega$ -prehension in  $P_1$  of the  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{12}$ .  $P_{121}$  is the  $\omega$ -prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_{21}$ , i.e., of  $P_2$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_1$ .  $P_{122}$  is the  $\omega$ -prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_{22}$ , i.e., of  $P_2$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of himself. The four together constitute the set of second-grade secondary parts of  $P_1$ . The interpretation of the eight terms in the next line of the diagram should now be obvious. I will content myself with explaining one of them, viz.,  $P_{1212}$ , and will leave the others to the reader's own intelligence.  $P_{1212}$  is  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_{212}$ ; i.e., of  $P_2$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_{12}$ ; i.e., of  $P_2$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_2$ . These eight terms together constitute the set of third-grade secondary parts of  $P_1$ . We can now consider McTaggart's argument.

2.1. *McTaggart's Argument.* I shall state this in my own way and try to make it clear. (i) Consider any two terms at the same level in the hierarchy, e.g.,  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ , or  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{21}$ , or  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{212}$ . There will be in  $P_1$   $\omega$ -prehensions of all such terms. And the  $\omega$ -prehensions in  $P_1$  of any two such terms will be *separate* particulars. (The same remarks apply, of course, *mutatis mutandis*, to  $P_2$ . But we are confining our attention in this argument to one of the selves in the hierarchy, viz.,  $P_1$ .) By calling these prehensions "separate" McTaggart means that they have no part in common. Thus, e.g.,  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehensions of  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  are  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{12}$  respectively. And these cannot overlap, since they are a *set of parts* of  $P_1$ . Similarly,  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehensions of  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{21}$  are  $P_{111}$  and  $P_{121}$  respectively. These, again, cannot overlap, since they are both members of one set of parts of  $P_1$ . It is evident that this is a general rule. It can be put into words as follows. "If a self is a primary part in a determining-correspondence hierarchy, its  $\omega$ -prehensions of any two terms in the hierarchy which are of any one grade can have no part in common." This is a fundamental premise in McTaggart's argument.

(ii) Suppose that, *sub specie temporis*, a self  $S$  simultaneously prehends two particulars  $X$  and  $Y$ . Under what circumstances should we say that  $S$ 's prehension of  $X$  and  $S$ 's prehension of  $Y$  are two particulars which have no part in common? McTaggart asserts that we should not say this



unless either (a)  $S$  prehends  $X$  and  $Y$  as dissimilar in some respect, or (b)  $S$ 's prehension of  $X$  differs from his prehension of  $Y$  in some intrinsic psychical quality, such as intensity, emotional tone, etc. Therefore, if  $S$  be a primary part in a determining-correspondence hierarchy of the kind which we are considering, and if  $X$  and  $Y$  be two terms of the same grade in that hierarchy,  $S$ 's  $\omega$ -prehensions of  $X$  and of  $Y$  must *either* be prehensions of  $X$  and  $Y$  as dissimilar in some respect, *or* they must differ from each other in intensity, emotional tone, or some other psychical quality.

(iii) In §225 of *The Nature of Existence* (Vol. I, p. 239) McTaggart claimed to show that there must be some grade in any determining-correspondence hierarchy such that no term which comes below this can have any characteristics except those which are intrinsically determined by its position in the hierarchy. I have considered this doctrine in Sub-section 2.62 of Chap. XXI of the present work (Vol. I, p. 396). Now suppose that this is true. Let us suppose, e.g., that in our example the secondary parts of the *first* grade were the last which had independent characteristics. Then a term of the first grade, like  $P_{12}$ , might have some characteristic  $C$  which was quite independent of its property of being the part of  $P_1$  which is an  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_2$ . But a term of the second grade, like  $P_{121}$ , could have no such characteristic. Any characteristic that it may have must be either identical with or conveyed by the characteristic of being the part of  $P_1$  which is the  $\omega$ -prehension of the part of  $P_2$  which is the  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_1$ .

Now consider two of  $P_1$ 's second-grade prehensions, e.g.,  $P_{112}$  and  $P_{121}$ . These cannot be distinguished by any difference of emotional tone or intensity or of any other independent quality. Yet they must be completely separate particulars. And McTaggart claims to show later that all  $\omega$ -prehensions are, *sub specie temporis*, simultaneous. Therefore, in having them,  $P_1$  must be prehending their objects,  $P_{12}$  and  $P_{21}$  respectively, *as dissimilar* to each other in some respect. The same argument will apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to all  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehensions of the second or any lower grade, e.g., to  $P_{1121}$ .



This step in the argument can now be generalised as follows. In a certain determining-correspondence hierarchy let the last grade whose members have independent characteristics be the  $n$ th. Let  $P_r$  be any self which is a primary part in this hierarchy. Consider any two terms which are both secondary parts of the  $n$ th or any lower grade.  $P_r$  will have  $\omega$ -prehensions of each of these terms, and these  $\omega$ -prehensions will be entirely separate particulars. And, *sub specie temporis*, they will be simultaneous. Now these  $\omega$ -prehensions will necessarily be of the  $(n+1)$ th or some lower grade. Therefore, by hypothesis, they can have no characteristics which are independent of their position in the hierarchy. Therefore they cannot differ in respect of emotional tone, intensity, or any other independent quality. Therefore the separateness of these two  $\omega$ -prehensions must be secured in the only other way that remains. They must be prehensions of their objects as *dissimilar* to each other in some respect.

This completes the first stage of McTaggart's argument to prove that in every  $\omega$ -prehension the object is correctly prehended as a self or an  $\omega$ -prehension, as the case may be.

(iv) For the next step of the argument we will again begin by taking a particular case, and will then generalise it. Let us suppose, e.g., that the secondary parts of the *first* grade have independent characteristics, but that those of the *second* and lower grades have not. We shall now show that any two secondary parts of the *third* or any lower grade in the same hierarchy must be prehensions of their objects as dissimilar in respect of characteristics which are determined by their position in the hierarchy and are not independent.

Consider, e.g., the two third-grade secondary parts  $P_{1212}$  and  $P_{1121}$ . The argument in step (iii) shows that in these prehensions their objects  $P_{212}$  and  $P_{121}$  must be prehended as dissimilar in respect of *some* characteristic. Now these objects are secondary parts of the second grade. Therefore, by hypothesis, they have no independent characteristics. All their characteristics are determined by their position in the hierarchy. Therefore  $P_{1212}$  and  $P_{1121}$  must be prehensions of their objects as dissimilar in respect of characteristics which are

determined by their position in the hierarchy and are not independent. Obviously the same kind of argument will prove the same kind of conclusion for any two secondary parts of any grade *lower than* the third.

We can now generalise this argument. In a certain determining-correspondence hierarchy let the last grade whose members have independent characteristics be the  $n$ th. Then any two secondary parts of the  $(n+2)$ th or any lower grade in the same hierarchy must be prehensions of their objects as dissimilar in respect of characteristics which are determined by their position in the hierarchy and are not independent. The argument will run as follows. Secondary parts of the  $(n+2)$ th grade will be prehensions whose objects are of the  $(n+1)$ th grade. The argument in step (iii) shows that in any two prehensions of the  $(n+2)$ th grade the objects must be prehended as dissimilar in respect of *some* characteristic. Now, by hypothesis, the objects, being of the  $(n+1)$ th grade, have no independent characteristics. Therefore in any two prehensions of the  $(n+2)$ th grade the objects must be prehended as dissimilar in respect of characteristics which are determined by their position in the hierarchy and are not independent. Obviously the same kind of argument will prove the same kind of conclusion for any two secondary parts of any grade *below* the  $(n+2)$ th.

(v) The case of secondary parts whose grade is *above* the  $(n+2)$ th must be deferred for the moment, while we follow up the argument about those whose grade is the  $(n+2)$ th or lower. The argument is as follows. It is impossible, McTaggart asserts in §418, to prehend a particular as having a determinable characteristic without prehending it as having a certain determinate form of that characteristic. In this respect prehension differs from judgment. I know, e.g., that the Pope's eyes are of some colour or other, without knowing of what colour they are and without having any belief on the point. But I cannot prehend a surface as coloured without prehending it as having a certain determinate colour. The application of this general principle to the present case is as follows.

Let us go back to the particular case which we treated at the beginning of step (iv) and afterwards generalised. It might be suggested that  $P_1$  might prehend  $P_{212}$  merely as that part of  $P_2$  which has *some* determining-correspondence relation to that part of  $P_1$  which has *the same* relation to  $P_2$ . Similarly, it might be suggested that  $P_1$  might prehend  $P_{121}$  merely as that part of  $P_1$  which has *some* determining-correspondence relation to that part of  $P_2$  which has *the same* relation to  $P_1$ . This would suffice to constitute a prehendend dissimilarity between  $P_{212}$  and  $P_{121}$  in respect of characteristics which are determined entirely by their positions in the hierarchy and are not independent. And yet  $P_{1212}$  and  $P_{1121}$  would *not* be prehensions of  $P_{212}$  and  $P_{121}$  *as prehensions*, which is what McTaggart wants to prove. McTaggart answers this by appealing to the general principle about determinable characteristics enunciated above.

If  $P_{212}$  is *prehended* as standing in some determining-correspondence relation or other, it must be prehendend as standing in a certain determinate relation. And, if this relation be in fact that of prehension to prehendend object, then  $P_{212}$  will be prehendend as standing in *this* relation. For the same reason  $P_{121}$  will be prehendend as standing in *this* relation if it is prehendend as standing in some such relation or other. Therefore  $P_{1212}$  will be a prehension of  $P_{212}$  *as* a prehension; and  $P_{1121}$  will be a prehension of  $P_{121}$  *as* a prehension.

The argument, if valid at all, can obviously be generalised. The generalised conclusion will be as follows. In a certain determining-correspondence hierarchy let the last grade whose members have independent characteristics be the  $n$ th. Then any secondary part which is of the  $(n+2)$ th grade or lower in the hierarchy must be a prehension of its object as an  $\omega$ -prehension. And, since its object will in fact be an  $\omega$ -prehension, any secondary part which is of the  $(n+2)$ th grade or lower will, to that extent, be a correct prehension of its object.

(vi) We must now consider the case of secondary parts whose grade is *above* the  $(n+2)$ th. As usual we will go back to the particular case which we treated at the beginning of

step (iv) and afterwards generalised. That is, we will suppose that the secondary parts of the *first* grade are the last in the hierarchy to have independent characteristics. Consider now two secondary parts of the *second* grade, e.g.,  $P_{112}$  and  $P_{121}$ . They are  $\omega$ -prehensions whose objects are respectively  $P_{12}$  and  $P_{21}$ .

The argument starts as before. Since  $P_{112}$  and  $P_{121}$  are separate prehensions, and since they are not distinguished by any difference of independent qualities, they must be prehensions of  $P_{12}$  and  $P_{21}$  as dissimilar in some respect. But now the argument cannot be continued as before. For  $P_{12}$  and  $P_{21}$  are secondary parts of the *first* grade; and we are assuming that such terms have characteristics which are independent of their position in the hierarchy. Therefore it seems possible that  $P_{112}$  might be a prehension of  $P_{12}$  as having some characteristic  $\psi$  which neither is nor entails that of being an  $\omega$ -prehension. Similarly it would seem that  $P_{121}$  might be a prehension of  $P_{21}$  as having some other characteristic  $\psi'$  which neither is nor entails that of being an  $\omega$ -prehension. Thus it would seem that  $P_{112}$  and  $P_{121}$  could be separate prehensions without being prehensions of their objects as  $\omega$ -prehensions.

Again, consider two secondary parts of the *first* grade, e.g.,  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{12}$ . These are separate prehensions. But (a) they have independent characteristics, and therefore they might *prima facie* be separate in virtue of a difference of intrinsic quality without being prehensions of their objects,  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ , as dissimilar in *any* respect. And, even if they are prehensions of  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  as dissimilar in *some* respect, it would seem that they need not be prehensions of  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  as different *selves*. For  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ , being of zero grade, will, by hypothesis, have independent characteristics. Therefore they might be prehended as dissimilar in respect of two characteristics  $\phi$  and  $\phi'$  which are not and do not entail the property of selfhood.

McTaggart's argument to refute these *prima facie* possibilities is contained in §419 of *The Nature of Existence* at the end of p. 103 and the beginning of p. 104. It is highly condensed, but it can be stated fully and clearly as follows.

Consider the term  $P_{1212}$ . This is of the third grade, and its



object is  $P_{212}$ . We have shown in step (v) that it is a prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_{212}$  as a prehension in  $P_2$  of  $P_{12}$ . But, unless  $P_1$  prehended  $P_2$  *as a self*, he could notprehend  $P_{212}$  as a prehension in  $P_2$ . Therefore  $P_1$  mustprehend  $P_2$  as a self. Therefore  $P_{12}$ , which is  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_2$ , must be a prehension of  $P_2$  *as a self*. If we had started by considering  $P_{1121}$ , e.g., instead of  $P_{1212}$ , we could have shown by a similar argument that  $P_{11}$ , which is  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_1$ , must be a prehension of  $P_1$  as a self. So first-grade secondary parts of  $P_1$  must be  $\omega$ -prehensions of their objects *as selves*. And, since their objects *are* selves, they must be, to that extent, correct.

Now consider the term  $P_{121}$ . This is a part of  $P_{12}$ . This can be seen by referring to the diagram, and it is a necessary consequence of the determining-correspondence conditions. Now both  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{12}$  are *in fact* prehensions. Now it is a general principle that one prehension cannot be part of another unless the self which owns them both prehends the object of the former as part of the object of the latter. (See Sub-section 1.3 of Chap. xxvi of the present work.) Now the object of  $P_{121}$  is  $P_{21}$  and the object of  $P_{12}$  is  $P_2$ . Therefore  $P_1$  mustprehend  $P_{21}$  as a part of  $P_2$ . Now we have shown above that  $P_1$  mustprehend  $P_2$  as a self. Therefore  $P_1$  mustprehend  $P_{21}$  as a part of something which he prehends as a self.

Consider finally the term  $P_{1212}$ . This is a part of  $P_{121}$ . This can be seen by referring to the diagram, and it is a necessary consequence of the determining-correspondence conditions. Now both  $P_{1212}$  and  $P_{121}$  are *in fact* prehensions. Therefore, as above,  $P_1$  mustprehend the object of  $P_{1212}$  as part of the object of  $P_{121}$ . That is, he mustprehend  $P_{21}$  as a whole of which  $P_{212}$  is a part. And we know that  $P_1$  mustprehend  $P_{212}$  as a prehension. For it is of the second grade; and therefore  $P_{1212}$ , his prehension of it, is of the third grade. And, by hypothesis, all such terms are prehensions of their objects as  $\omega$ -prehensions.

We see then that  $P_1$  mustprehend  $P_{21}$  (a) as a part of something which he prehends as a self, and (b) as a whole which contains a part which he prehends as a prehension. McTaggart contends that any particular which is prehended



as having these two characteristics must be prehended as being at any rate "of the nature of a prehension".

A precisely similar argument would prove a precisely similar conclusion about the other first-grade secondary parts in the hierarchy, viz.,  $P_{11}$ ,  $P_{12}$ , and  $P_{22}$ . By means of the prehensions  $P_{111}$ ,  $P_{112}$ , and  $P_{122}$  respectively,  $P_1$  must prehend each of these terms (a) as a part of something which he prehends as a self, and (b) as a whole which contains a part which he prehends as a prehension. Therefore, according to McTaggart,  $P_1$  must prehend each of these terms as being at any rate "of the nature of a prehension".

It is easy to see that the argument, which we have conducted on the special assumption that the secondary parts of the *first* grade are the lowest in the hierarchy to have independent characteristics, can be generalised. The generalised conclusion will be as follows. In a certain determining-correspondence hierarchy let the last grade whose members have independent characteristics be the  $n$ th. Then the first-grade secondary parts must be  $\omega$ -prehensions of the primary parts *as selves*. And the secondary parts of the second to the  $(n+1)$ th grades, both inclusive, must be  $\omega$ -prehensions of their respective objects as being at any rate "*of the nature of prehensions*".

(vii) Can we go further than this and show that the secondary parts of the second to the  $(n+1)$ th grade, both inclusive, must be prehensions of their respective objects *as prehensions*? McTaggart claims to prove this in the last paragraph of §419 of *The Nature of Existence*.

The argument may be put as follows. What kinds of particulars would be "of the nature of prehensions" without actually being prehensions? Such a particular might be either (a) a group of prehensions which was not itself a prehension, or (b) a part of a prehension without being itself a prehension. Let us now go back to the special case which we considered in the argument of step (vi). We showed there that  $P_1$  must prehend  $P_{21}$ , e.g., as being of the nature of a prehension. The question then is this. Could  $P_1$  prehend  $P_{21}$  either (a) as a group of prehensions, without prehending it as a prehension;

or (b) as a part of a prehension, without prehending it as a prehension? (It may be remarked that  $P_{21}$  really is a group of prehensions, in McTaggart's terminology; for the two second-grade  $\omega$ -prehensions,  $P_{211}$  and  $P_{212}$ , really are a set of parts of it. On the other hand,  $P_{21}$  is not a part of any prehension. For it is a secondary part of the first grade, and so is a part of the self  $P_2$  but not of any prehension.)

McTaggart's attempt to show that this question must be answered in the negative is as follows. To be a prehension of an object  $X$  is a relational property which involves  $X$  as a constituent. Now a term cannot be *prehended* as having such a relational property unless the self who prehends it as having this property also prehends the term  $X$ . Therefore  $P_1$  could notprehend  $P_{21}$  as a prehension of the object  $P_1$  unless he also prehended  $P_1$ . I will conclude the argument in McTaggart's own words, merely making the necessary changes in the symbols and substituting "prehend" for "perceive".  $P_1$  "will thereforeprehend  $P_1$ , to which  $P_{21}$  stands in this relation; and, since  $P_1$  is a single object, we"—i.e.,  $P_1$  in our example—"shall see that  $P_{21}$  is a single prehension". I have not dared to put this argument in my own words, because it seems to me so disgracefully bad that I should expect to be accused of having misrepresented it if I had paraphrased it.

I assume that McTaggart held that the argument could be generalised, and that he would claim to prove in this way that  $P_1$  mustprehend *as a prehension* any secondary part which he prehends as "being of the nature of a prehension".

(viii) We can now gather together the threads of this long and complex argument. (a) In any determining-correspondence hierarchy there must be a certain grade of secondary parts which is the lowest grade whose members have independent characteristics. Let this be the  $n$ th grade. Then (b) it is shown in step (v) that any secondary part which is of the  $(n+2)$ th grade or lower must be a prehension of its object *as a prehension*. (c) It is shown in step (vi) that any secondary part of the *first* grade must be a prehension of its object *as a self*. (d) It is also shown in step (vi) that any secondary part of the second to the  $(n+1)$ th grade, both inclusive, must be a

prehension of its object as "being of the nature of a *prehension*". (e) It is shown in step (vii) that any secondary part which is prehended as being of the nature of a prehension must be prehended *as a prehension*. Therefore (f) every secondary part in the hierarchy is a prehension of its object either as a self or as an  $\omega$ -prehension, as the case may be. And so all  $\omega$ -prehensions are, to this extent, correct.

2.2. *Criticisms of McTaggart's Argument.* Before criticising this argument I cannot refrain from expressing my admiration at McTaggart's power to construct and express such an intricate bit of reasoning without the help of a diagram and with his own very imperfect notation. I very much doubt whether any other philosopher could have done such a thing. Having paid this tribute, I will make my criticisms.

(i) We may accept the proposition that, if a self is a primary part in a hierarchy in which the determining-correspondence relation is that of prehension to prehended object, then its  $\omega$ -prehensions of any two terms which are of any one grade in the hierarchy can have no part in common. For this is a direct consequence of the propositions which constitute the definition of a determining-correspondence hierarchy.

(ii) Suppose we accept McTaggart's doctrine that the proposition "*S* is prehending *O*" is equivalent to the proposition "There is a particular  $\Omega$  which (a) is a part of *S*, and (b) stands to *O* in the relation of prehension to prehended object." Then the question whether a self which simultaneously prehends two objects *X* and *Y* has two entirely separate prehensions or not is intelligible. And, although I must confess that I have no clear idea of the necessary conditions for an affirmative answer to this question, McTaggart's suggestion of two alternative conditions, one or other of which must be fulfilled if an affirmative answer is to be given, seems plausible enough.

(iii) On p. 396 of Vol. I of the present work I have given my reasons for doubting the proposition which is the premise of this step. I do not admit that it follows from anything that McTaggart has proved that there must be a stage in any determining-correspondence hierarchy such that no term at any lower stage has any characteristic independent of its

position in the hierarchy. But, if this premise be granted and we also accept the criterion of separateness proposed in step (ii), the argument seems to be valid.

(iv) The fourth step is a correctly drawn consequence of the result of step (iii) together with certain propositions which are involved in the definition of a hierarchy in which the determining-correspondence relation is that of prehension to prehended object. Its conclusion may therefore be granted on the same assumptions as were needed to validate step (iii).

(v) This step introduces the additional premise that, if a particular be prehended as having a certain determinable characteristic, it must be prehended as having it in a certain determinate form. This we may accept. But it seems to me that, in the course of the argument, McTaggart tacitly assumes that this principle entails more than it really does. I think that this happens because he forgets for the moment that, on his view, there can be and is *misprehension*.

All that the principle by itself asserts is that I cannotprehend a particular as having the determinable characteristic *D* (e.g., colour) without prehending it as having a certain determinate value *d* of *D* (e.g., redness). But McTaggart assumes, in the present step of his argument, that I cannotprehend a particular as having *D* unless Iprehend it as having that determinate value of *D* *which it in fact has*. This would be legitimate if misprehension were ruled out as impossible. But, if misprehension be possible, I mightprehend a particular as having the determinate value *d* of *D* (e.g., redness) when in fact it has the different determinate value *d'* (e.g., blueness). The general principle will still be obeyed. So, unless we have an additional premise to rule out the possibility of this kind of misprehension, McTaggart's argument does not suffice to prove that every secondary part which is of the  $(n+2)$ th grade or lower in the hierarchy must be a prehension of its object *as an  $\omega$ -prehension*. And the additional premise does not seem particularly plausible if the possibility of misprehension in general be admitted.

(vi) The argument in this step presupposes, as one of its premises, the result which is supposed to have been established



in step (v). I have just tried to show that this result has not been established. Let us, however, waive this objection and suppose that the argument in step (v) can be made valid. Then, so far as I can see, the argument to prove that the first-grade secondary parts of  $P_1$  must be  $\omega$ -prehensions of their objects *as selves* is valid. And the argument to prove that the secondary parts of the second to the  $(n+1)$ th grades, both inclusive, must be  $\omega$ -prehensions of their respective objects *as being of the nature of prehensions* seems also to be valid.

(vii) The argument in this step seems to me to be quite inconclusive. In the course of step (vi) McTaggart claimed to have shown that  $P_1$  must prehend any first-grade secondary part, such as  $P_{21}$ , (a) as a part of something which he prehends as a self, viz.,  $P_1$ , and (b) as a whole which contains a part which he prehends as a prehension, viz.,  $P_{212}$ . What he has to prove in step (vii) is that  $P_1$  must prehend  $P_{21}$  as a *prehension*, and not merely as a *group* of prehensions or as a *part* of a prehension. Now he does not discuss the second of these alternatives at all. It might be said that this could hardly arise in the case of a *first-grade* secondary part, like  $P_{21}$ , since it is not a part of any other prehension. But this alternative certainly will arise in the case of any secondary part of lower grade than the first. For it will in fact be part of another  $\omega$ -prehension; and therefore the possibility that it might be prehended as part of an  $\omega$ -prehension without being prehended as a prehension ought to be seriously considered and disproved before McTaggart's conclusion could be generalised. Thus I should say that, even if McTaggart's argument sufficed to prove that  $P_1$  must prehend every first-grade secondary part, such as  $P_{21}$ , as a prehension, it does not suffice to justify the generalised conclusion that  $P_1$  must prehend every secondary part from the first to the  $n$ th grade, both inclusive, as a prehension.

Let us now confine our attention to the special argument about first-grade secondary parts, such as  $P_{21}$ . So far as I can see, this argument is either inconclusive or circular. It uses as a premise the proposition that, *if*  $P_1$  prehends  $P_{21}$  as a prehension of the object  $P_1$ , he must *ipso facto* prehend  $P_1$ .



We need not quarrel with this premise. But we must make the following criticism. Either the categorical premise " $P_1$  does prehend  $P_{21}$  as a prehension of the object  $P_1$ " is assumed in addition, or it is not. If it is *not*, the argument cannot possibly prove the *categorical* conclusion that  $P_1$  prehends  $P_{21}$  as a prehension. But, if it *is* added, the argument is plainly circular; for the added premise is simply the conclusion which McTaggart is professing to prove. The whole question at issue is: "Does  $P_1$  necessarily prehend  $P_{21}$  as a prehension; or may he possibly prehend it simply as a group of prehensions?"

Admitting all that McTaggart has argued in the previous steps, all that we know is that  $P_1$  prehends  $P_{21}$  as (a) a part of  $P_2$ , which he prehends as a self, and (b) as a whole containing  $P_{212}$ , which he prehends as an  $\omega$ -prehension. I cannot see that his last step has the least tendency to carry us beyond this to the conclusion that  $P_1$  prehends  $P_{21}$  as an  $\omega$ -prehension.

I conclude, as the result of these criticisms, that McTaggart has failed to prove that every secondary part in a hierarchy, in which the determining-correspondence relation is that of prehension to prehended object, must be a prehension of its object as either a self or an  $\omega$ -prehension, as the case may be. Henceforth I shall grant him this conclusion for the sake of continuing the discussion; but I regard it as quite unproven.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### OSTENSIBLY NON-PREHENSIVE COGITATIONS

In §§ 420 to 426, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*, McTaggart tries to show that none of the other ostensible forms of cogitation beside prehension can pass the tests of endless divisibility and determining correspondence. He concludes that nothing can be an experience of judging, of supposing, of being acquainted with a characteristic, or of imaging. All the experiences which, when introspected, appear to their owner as non-prehensive cogitations must in fact be *prehensions* which he introspectively misprehends.

Before we consider McTaggart's detailed arguments about each different kind of ostensibly non-prehensive cogitation there is one general remark to be made. If his detailed arguments be valid, all that they immediately prove is that nothing could be a non-prehensive cogitation of any kind unless it were *also* a prehension. This does not suffice to prove that there cannot be non-prehensive cogitations. In order to prove this it would evidently be necessary to add the premise that the characteristic of being a non-prehensive cogitation of any kind is incompatible with that of being a prehension or a part of a prehension or a complex whole composed of inter-related prehensions. Unless this be granted it is quite possible that there might be particulars which fulfil the conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence in virtue of their prehensive character, whilst they are also non-prehensive cogitations of one kind or another.

McTaggart seems never to have considered this possibility. He always assumes without question that anything which appears to introspection as a non-prehensive cogitation of any kind, and does not appear as a prehension, must be in that respect misprehended. But it seems possible, even if we accept

his detailed arguments, to hold that we make no mistake in prehending it as an experience of judging or supposing, etc. It seems possible that at worst we fail to prehend it as being also a prehension or a part of one or a whole composed of prehensions.

We will now consider the detailed arguments.

(i) *Ostensible States of Acquaintance with Characteristics*. It is easy to see that the relation of being an acquaintance with a certain characteristic could not be a determining-correspondence relation. For consider any primary whole  $P$ , any set  $\alpha_1$  of primary parts of  $P$ , and any relation  $R$ . If the reader will look back to Vol. I of this work, p. 385, he will find the conditions which must be fulfilled if  $R$  is to be a determining-correspondence relation giving rise to a hierarchy of parts of  $P$  with  $\alpha_1$  as the set of primary parts. I will quote the second of these conditions, since this will be enough for our present purpose. It is as follows. "Anything to which a part of  $P$  stands in the relation  $R$  is either a member of  $\alpha_1$  or is a part of some member of  $\alpha_1$  and has  $R$  to something."

Now suppose, if possible, that  $R$  were the relation between a state of acquaintance with a characteristic and the characteristic which is its object. Then the condition just quoted could not possibly be fulfilled. For  $P$  is a particular and  $\alpha_1$  is a set of parts of it. Therefore every member of  $\alpha_1$  and every part of any member of  $\alpha_1$  is a *particular* and not a *characteristic*. On the other hand, anything to which a term stands in the relation which we are now considering must be a *characteristic* and not a *particular*. Therefore the condition cannot be fulfilled by the relation in question.

This objection disposes of the suggestion that the relation of being an acquaintance with a characteristic could be a determining-correspondence relation. But I do not see that it is impossible that a particular, which is an  $\omega$ -prehension or a part of one or a whole composed of  $\omega$ -prehensions or parts of them, should bear this relation to a characteristic. Therefore I do not admit that McTaggart has proved that nothing could be a state of acquaintance with a characteristic.

(ii) *Ostensible Judgings*. The question now to be considered

is whether the relation of a judging to a term which is judged about could be a determining-correspondence relation. Suppose I judge that Edwin is loved by Angelina, then the relation to be considered is that which relates my judging to Edwin. (I am not sure whether McTaggart would hold that the same relation relates my judging to Angelina; and I am still less sure whether he would hold that it relates my judging to the relation of loving. But this is unimportant for our present purpose.)

It is easy to show that this relation could not fulfil the conditions of determining correspondence. Any term in any grade of the hierarchy below the first would (*a*) be a state of judging, and (*b*) have a set of parts, each member of which is a state of judging. Now it is quite possible for a state of judging to be about another state of judging. E.g., I can judge that Edwin's judging that he is loved by Angelina is mistaken. Moreover, if both the primary and the secondary judging took place in the same self, it might be possible to hold that the former is a part of the latter. Suppose, e.g., that Edwin were to judge that his judging that Angelina loves him is mistaken. Then it might, I suppose, be held that this secondary judging of Edwin's contains as a part his primary judging. But, even if all this be granted, we cannot admit that a state of judging could have a *set* of parts *each* member of which is a state of judging. In the example which we have given it is evident that another constituent of Edwin's secondary judging is his thought of the characteristic of being mistaken. This is not a state of judging; it is a state of acquaintance with a characteristic. It is evident, then, that the condition for determining correspondence cannot be fulfilled by the relation under consideration.

I have substantially modified McTaggart's argument on this topic, because his own statements on p. 105 of *The Nature of Existence* are terribly confused. He makes remarks in §421 which show plainly that he is using "judgment", not in the sense of "state of judging", but in the sense of "proposition judged". Now, in the first place, he has rejected "judgments" in this sense, since he has rejected "proposi-



tions" in the sense of immediate objects of acts of judging. Secondly, the argument becomes irrelevant. For he is supposed to be considering the claims of other kinds of *experience* beside prehension to fulfil the conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence. But, unless "judgment" is taken to mean "state of judging" and not "proposition judged", judgments are *not* experiences. I think that my amended argument removes the confusions and proves what McTaggart wanted to prove without departing fundamentally from the real course of his thought.

Once more, I do not think that it follows that nothing could really be an experience of judging. For I do not see why an  $\omega$ -prehension or a part of one or a whole composed of  $\omega$ -prehensions or parts of them should not have the property of being a state of judging that a certain term has a certain quality or stands in a certain relation to certain other terms. Certainly, some members of such a whole would have to be states of acquaintance with characteristics. But, as I have tried to show, there is no reason why certain  $\omega$ -prehensions or groups of them should not be states of acquaintance with characteristics.

(iii) *Ostensible Supposings*. Everything that has been said about ostensible judgments applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to ostensible supposings; for the internal structure of a supposing is plainly exactly like that of the corresponding judging. The difference is that, in the latter case, there is the factor of conviction (positive or negative); whilst, in the former, this is lacking.

(iv) *Ostensible Imagings*. In Chap. xxv, Sub-section 1.1, of the present work I have tried to explain McTaggart's account of imaging and to clear up the confusions in it. It will be remembered that he claims to show, quite independently of the criteria of endless divisibility and determining correspondence, that ostensible imagings are really introspectively misprehended prehensions. His argument is that there is no other way of explaining how we ostensibly image non-existent imaginata, such as Cromwell's contempt for the Young Pretender. In Sub-section 1.12 of the chapter mentioned above

I tried to show that such experiences could be accounted for in other ways. A correct theory of imaging seems to me to involve ostensible judging and ostensible supposing as well as ostensible prehending. If it could be shown that ostensible judging and supposing were really misprehended prehension, I should have to admit that imaging reduces to this. But, as I have tried to show in the present chapter, McTaggart has failed to prove this proposition about ostensible judging and supposing.

Still, it is quite certain on my view of imaging that the relation between an imaging and its imaginatum could not be a determining-correspondence relation. Indeed, the example of imaging Cromwell's contempt for the Young Pretender makes it clear that we cannot talk of the imaginatum as if it were an existent term to which the state of imaging stands in a certain relation. In such cases the experient *prehends* certain images; he *entertains* certain suppositions; and he *judgets* or takes for granted that the images resemble the *sensa* which he would prehend if his suppositions had been true and he had been present in the supposed situation. Here there is no one relation and no one term. So we cannot talk of *the* relation between an imaging and its imaginatum; and the question whether *this* relation could be one of determining correspondence falls to the ground.

I will now sum up the results of this chapter. I think that it does follow from the propositions which define a determining-correspondence hierarchy in Vol. I, pp. 385 to 387, of the present work that no relation between a cogitation and its object except that of a prehension to its prehensum could be a determining-correspondence relation. And, if we grant certain principles about prehension which McTaggart has stated and which we have discussed in Chaps. XXVI and XXX of the present work, it is not impossible that the relation of a prehension to its object should be a determining-correspondence relation. These two propositions together entail that every cogitation which is ostensibly of some other kind must be an  $\omega$ -prehension or a part of one or a complex whole composed of  $\omega$ -prehensions or parts of them. But it does not

follow that experiences which are ostensibly judgments, supposings, imagings, or states of acquaintance with characteristics, are not really so. For it has not been shown that there is any incompatibility between being a prehension or a part of one or a complex whole composed of prehensions or parts of them, on the one hand, and being a state of judging or supposing or imaging or acquaintance with a characteristic, on the other. McTaggart plainly thinks that he has shown that to be a non-prehensive cogitation of any kind is a delusive characteristic; i.e., one which nothing *could really have*, but which certain prehensions or parts of prehensions or groups whose members are prehensions or parts of them are introspectively *misprehended as having*. So far as I can see, he has not given the least reason for this conclusion, even if we admit all his premises about endless divisibility and determining correspondence.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### OSTENSIBLE SENSE-QUALITIES AND OSTENSIBLE MATERIALITY

At the beginning of Sub-section 2·2 of Chap. xxvii of the present work I mentioned that McTaggart's doctrine of matter is much more radically destructive in *The Nature of Existence* than in *Some Dogmas of Religion*. In the latter book he is content to relegate matter to the position of the Gorgons and the Harpies; creatures which might have existed but which almost certainly never did and never will. In *The Nature of Existence* he claims to show, by means of the endless-divisibility test and the determining-correspondence test, that no particular could have the characteristic of materiality and that no particular could have the qualities which sensibilia are prehended as having when we sense them. The argument about materiality will be found in §§354 to 363, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*. The argument about sensible qualities will be found in Chap. xxxv of that work. In each case a certain alternative is left open until we come to §§429 to 431, inclusive, in Chap. xxxviii of *The Nature of Existence*. At that stage this alternative is rejected. It is evident that the denial that any particular could be a sensum is much more disturbing than the denial that any particular could be a material thing. For some particulars are *prehended as* having sensible qualities; whilst no particulars are prehended as being material things, though in ordinary visual perception certain prehended particulars are *perceptually accepted as* parts of the surfaces of material things.

I propose to take together all the passages to which I have referred, and to weave them into a single continuous argument. I shall state the argument in my own way, but I shall give due warning if I depart in principle from McTaggart's own line of thought.



### 1. McTaggart's Argument.

(i) Any sensible, when sensed, is prehended as having characteristics which fall into some of the following classes. (a) Spatial Characteristics. These include sensible extension, shape, position in the sense-field, and sensible spatial relations to other sensa in the same field. (b) Temporal Characteristics. These include duration and relations of sensible simultaneity or partial or total sequence to other sensa within the same specious present. (c) Extensible Qualities. These are qualities, like colour or temperature, which are presented as spread over an area or as spread throughout a volume. Perhaps auditory qualities and some kinds of somatic sensible qualities, such as "achiness", would be examples of the latter alternative. (d) Qualities which have intensive magnitude but are not extensible.

About this list the following remarks must be made. (a) A sensible is always prehended as having some temporal characteristics, but it is doubtful whether all sensibilia are prehended as having spatial characteristics. Those which are most obviously prehended as spatial are visual sensibilia and tactual ones. (b) If a sensible is prehended as having spatial characteristics, it must be prehended as having some extensible quality; and conversely. (c) Extensible qualities may, and generally do, have intensive magnitude. Thus, colour varies in saturation and intensity; temperature in degree; and so on.

(ii) A sensible is a particular. Therefore there must be at least one dimension in which it is divisible into parts within parts without end. And, in order that this may not lead to a contradiction, the determining-correspondence condition must be fulfilled for that dimension. This amounts to saying that there must be a determining-correspondence hierarchy for that dimension, such that every part of a sensible in that dimension is either (a) a term in that hierarchy, or (b) is sufficiently describable by reference to its relations to terms in that hierarchy.

(iii) Only two of the characteristics which sensibilia are

prehended as having could plausibly be regarded as dimensions in which sensibilia are endlessly divisible. These are spatial extension and temporal duration.

(iv) In §§356 to 360, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*, McTaggart claims to prove that the determining-correspondence condition could not be fulfilled for a spatially extended whole which was endlessly divisible into spatially extended parts. In §§361 and 362 he claims to prove that the determining-correspondence condition could not be fulfilled for a temporally extended whole which was endlessly divisible into temporally extended parts. The argument is extremely complicated, and it is evidently the fundamental step in the whole chain of reasoning. I propose, therefore, to treat it by itself in a special sub-section.

(v) If the arguments in step (iv) be valid, it follows that the characteristics which sensibilia are prehended as having will not enable them to fulfil both the endless-divisibility condition and the determining-correspondence condition. Yet, being particulars, they must fulfil both these conditions. Therefore sensibilia must have *some* characteristic which they are *not* prehended as having; and this must be such that they are endlessly divisible in respect of it, and that their parts in this dimension form a determining-correspondence hierarchy.

(vi) Now either this characteristic, which sensibilia must have but are not prehended as having, is compatible with those which they are prehended as having or it is not. Suppose that it is compatible. Then we have not shown that there cannot be *sensa* unless we define "*sensa*" as particulars which have *only* those characteristics which sensibilia are prehended as having when they are sensed. If we define "*sensa*" as particulars which have those characteristics which sensibilia are prehended as having when they are sensed, we shall have shown only that *sensa* must have another characteristic *beside* those which are involved in the definition of "being a *sensum*". This would be interesting, but not very startling.

Suppose, on the other hand, that the required characteristic is incompatible with that of being spatially extended. Then it will follow, at the first move, that no sensible can be spatially

extended. And it will follow, at the second move, that no sensible can have any extensible quality, such as colour or temperature. It will follow, therefore, that nothing can be a visual or a tactual sensum. Now it is certain that most sensibilia are prehended as spatially extended and either as coloured or as having temperature. So these ostensibly exemplified characteristics will be delusive.

(vii) McTaggart claims to have shown that the only relation known to us which could possibly be a determining-correspondence relation is that of a prehension to its object. Now the *referent* of this relation is necessarily a spiritual particular, viz., a prehension. Moreover, this relation can give rise to a determining-correspondence hierarchy only if its *relatum*, i.e., the prehended object, is in every case either a self or an  $\omega$ -prehension in a self of a self or of an  $\omega$ -prehension. Therefore, if this relation is to give rise to a determining-correspondence hierarchy, both its referent and its relatum must be *spiritual*. The justification for these statements will be found in Chaps. XXXI and XXXII of the present work. McTaggart also claims to have shown that no particular could be both spiritual and spatial. This doctrine is discussed in Section I of Chap. XXX of the present work.

It follows that sensibilia cannot really have spatial characteristics unless they have some other characteristic which is (a) quite unknown to us either by sensation or by introspection; (b) compatible with spatiality, as spirituality is not; and yet (c) so far analogous to spirituality in general and to prehension in particular that it can give rise to a hierarchy which answers to the conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence.

We cannot, of course, prove that this latter alternative is impossible. Therefore we cannot positively prove that sensibilia do not have spatial characteristics. What we can say is this. Our experience provides us with no materials for forming any determinate conception of a way in which sensibilia might fulfil the conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence if they be really spatial. It does provide us with materials for forming a determinate conception

of a way in which sensibilia might fulfil these conditions if they be not really spatial. Therefore, if it be granted that particulars could be prehended as having characteristics which do not and cannot belong to any particular, it seems more reasonable to take the second alternative. It seems more reasonable to suppose that spatiality, and any other ostensibly manifested characteristics which involve it, are delusive. This is the alternative which McTaggart takes. He states quite clearly and explicitly in §432 of *The Nature of Existence* that he does not claim to have given a "rigid demonstration" of this doctrine, and that he does not believe that it could be rigidly demonstrated.

(viii) It is plain that precisely similar arguments, leading to a similar conclusion, can be applied to materiality. For spatiality is an essential factor in the definition of "being a material object". No doubt some philosophers have used "materiality" in a much wider sense than this. They have given the name of "material object" to those particulars, of whatever kind they may be, which give rise to those groups of sensations which are taken to be evidence of the presence of a "material thing" in the ordinary sense. Naturally the argument has no application to philosophers who use words in this way.

1.1. *Detailed account of Step iv.* Every step in the above argument except the fourth is quite easy to follow and involves no principles which have not been already explained and criticised in the course of the present work. We will therefore concentrate our attention on the fourth step. We shall have to consider in turn the arguments about spatial extension and temporal extension.

1.11. *Spatial Extension.* The argument about spatial extension will be found in §§356 to 360, inclusive of *The Nature of Existence*. McTaggart is arguing there that a particular which was material could not obey the two conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence in respect of the characteristics which form the definition of "material thing". It is evident that he uses the word "matter" in this argument for what would commonly be called "the material



world", i.e., for the collective whole composed of all material things in the world considered as forming a single three-dimensional spatial system. In §376 he asserts, without going into detail, that his negative conclusion about ostensible matter can be carried over to ostensible *sensa*. I think that this is correct. It is true that the material world, which we will call "Matter" for short, might be a single primary whole, whilst the *sensa* in the universe would presumably be distributed among a number of primary wholes. But this difference would not affect McTaggart's argument. So we may confine our attention to Matter.

The question at issue is this. Granted that each material thing, and therefore Matter as a collective whole, is *prima facie* divisible into spatial parts within parts without end, is there any characteristic involved in the definition of "materiality" in virtue of which this unending series of spatial parts could be arranged in a determining-correspondence hierarchy?

Setting aside temporal characteristics for the present, we are left with two kinds of characteristic involved in the definition of "materiality". These may be called the "geometrical" and the "non-geometrical". The former include extension, shape, position, and spatial relations. The latter include such qualities as colour, temperature, taste-quality, smell-quality, and so on.

Now, if the conditions are to be fulfilled, Matter must have a set of Primary Parts, each of which will be a material thing. Any bit of matter that we can mention will either be one of these Primary Bodies, as they might be called; or will be a part of one of them; or will be a whole composed of several such bodies or of parts of several such bodies. As usual, we will denote the primary parts by the symbols  $P_1$ ,  $P_2$ , etc.

Each of these primary parts would have to have a sufficient description. And there would have to be some relation  $R$ , fulfilling the conditions laid down for determining correspondence in pp. 385 to 387 of Vol. I of the present work. Could such sufficient descriptions and such a relation be found among the *non-geometrical* constituents of materiality?



This is the first question which McTaggart asks; and he proceeds to answer it in the negative in §356 of *The Nature of Existence*.

Let us suppose, e.g., that the primary parts could be sufficiently described by means of their colours.  $P_1$  might be the only red body,  $P_2$  the only blue body, and so on, in the universe. Of course this would give only a very small number of primary parts, and it is difficult to believe that the group thus given could be a set of parts of the whole material world. This might, however, be met by describing  $P_1$  as the only body which has a certain perfectly determinate shade of a certain colour, and by describing the other primary parts by other determinate shades of the same or another colour. The number of different shades of any colour is certainly very great, and is possibly infinite. So an enormous group of bodies could be described in this way.

I think that there are certain other preliminary difficulties about the way of describing primary parts, which McTaggart does not mention. We are assuming that colour is an intrinsic property of bodies. But, even so, colour would primarily belong to the surfaces of bodies. Are we to suppose that "the blue body" means "the body whose surface is blue" or "the body which is blue throughout"? On the first alternative the blue body could have parts which are not blue; as, e.g., a fruit which is a yellow body, in the sense that its outer surface is yellow, can have parts, viz., pips, which are not yellow but are black. It will be seen that McTaggart's argument, which we shall consider after we have cleared up these preliminary obscurities, tacitly assumes that "the blue body" means "the body which is blue throughout".

If we make this assumption, another difficulty at once arises, which McTaggart fails to notice. Every body has parts and every part of a body is a body. Therefore every body which is blue throughout has parts which are themselves blue bodies. Therefore the property of being a blue body *cannot* be an exclusive description of any particular. To avoid this objection we should have to substitute for the description "blue body" the more complicated description "body which

is blue throughout and is not a part of any blue body". Similar changes would have to be made in the descriptions of the other primary parts by means of colours.

We must now notice a further complication. A body might be blue throughout and yet not *uniformly* blue throughout. Every part of it might have some shade of blue, but some parts might have one shade and other parts another shade of blue. Would this be allowable in the description of a primary part? Or must the description be of the form "body which has throughout a single shade of blue, and which is not a part of any blue body"? McTaggart does discuss this question of uniformity in §356 at the top of p. 35. He rejects the non-uniform alternative on the following grounds. He says that, if the primary part were described simply as blue, and this were allowed to cover the possibility that different parts of it should have different shades of blue, "the sufficient description of the primary part would depend on the sufficient descriptions of its secondary parts". Now it is one of the conditions for a determining-correspondence hierarchy that the primary parts shall be sufficiently describable without reference to sufficient descriptions of their parts.

It seems to me that the statement which I have quoted is false. Suppose that there were one and only one body such that (a) every part of it has some shade of blue, and (b) it is not a part of any blue body. Then the property of having every part blue of some shade, and not being a part of any blue body, would certainly be a sufficient description. And it most certainly *does not* involve a reference to *sufficient* descriptions of any of the parts. It involves a reference only to the highly indeterminate and insufficient description of "having some shade of blueness". Therefore I cannot see that such a sufficient description of a primary part would break the rule which McTaggart says that it would break.

However this may be, it emerges from our discussion that the kind of sufficient descriptions of primary parts which McTaggart has in mind is of the form "being a body which has throughout one determinate shade of a single colour, and which is not a part of any body which has any shade of that

colour". We can now consider the argument to prove that a determining correspondence hierarchy cannot be constructed for the spatial parts of such a set of bodies.

The difficulty is to find any relation of a non-geometrical kind which would answer to the conditions of determining correspondence. Suppose that  $P_1$  is sufficiently describable as the body which has a certain shade of red throughout, and which is not a part of any red body. Suppose that  $P_2$  is sufficiently describable in a similar way with "blue" substituted for "red". Let us call  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  respectively "the red primary body" and "the blue primary body". We can assume for simplicity, without affecting the argument, that  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  are the only primary bodies and thus constitute a set of parts of Matter. Let  $R$  be a relation of determining correspondence. Then  $P_1$  must have a set of parts,  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{12}$ , such that the former can be sufficiently described as the part of the red primary body which has  $R$  to the red primary body, and  $P_{12}$  can be sufficiently described as the part of the red primary body which has  $R$  to the blue primary body. What could  $R$  be?

It could not be colour-likeness. For no part of a body which is red throughout could be like in colour to a body which is blue throughout. So  $P_{12}$  could not be described in this way. For similar reasons it could not be the relation of colour-blending. We could not describe  $P_{12}$  as the part of the blue primary body whose colour is a blend of the colours of  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ . For in that case  $P_{12}$  would be purple. And a purple body cannot be part of a body which is of a single shade of blue throughout. But, if  $R$  cannot be the relation of colour-likeness or colour-blending, it is difficult to see what else it can be unless we introduce some other non-geometrical characteristics beside colour.

Would the difficulty be eased if we dropped the condition that each primary body is to have a single shade of colour throughout? McTaggart refuses to allow this condition to be dropped, for reasons which I have already mentioned and rejected. But I cannot see that we should be any better off if we allowed that  $P_1$  could have parts which are of different

shades of red and that  $P_2$  could have parts which are of different shades of blue.  $P_{12}$  would have to be described as the part of the blue primary body whose shade bears to the colour of the red primary body a certain relation  $R$ .  $P_{11}$  would have to be described as the part of the blue primary body whose shade bears to the colour of the blue primary body *the same* relation  $R$ . What could the relation  $R$  be in the first case; and how could it be the same relation in both cases? Again, would not the old difficulty arise at some stage of the sub-division, even if it could be avoided at the earlier stages? Should we not eventually come down to a set of parts of  $P_1$  each of which was homogeneous throughout in its shade of red? And, if so, should we not be in exactly the same position in respect of *further* sub-divisions as that in which we were at *the first* sub-division when we supposed that each primary body has a single shade of a certain colour throughout it?

The next suggestion which McTaggart tries is to introduce a second non-geometrical characteristic beside colour. Suppose that  $P_1$  had a set of two parts, one of which was sweet and the other sour. And suppose that the same was true of  $P_2$ . Then, no doubt, these two parts of  $P_1$  could be sufficiently described respectively as "the sweet part of the body which is uniformly red throughout and is not a part of any red body" and as "the sour part of the body which is uniformly red throughout and is not a part of any red body". Similar descriptions could be given of these two parts of  $P_2$ . To be accurate we should have to speak of "the *maximum* sweet part" and "the *maximum* sour part"; for, otherwise, the descriptions are plainly not exclusive. But this method will not lead to a determining-correspondence hierarchy. Which of these two parts of  $P_1$  is to be called  $P_{11}$ , and which of them is to be called  $P_{12}$ ? There is no special relation connecting either sweetness or sourness with either redness or blueness. Yet  $P_{11}$  must be describable as that part of  $P_1$  which has a certain relation  $R$  to  $P_1$ ;  $P_{12}$  must be describable as that part of  $P_1$  which has *the same* relation to  $P_2$ ; and similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to  $P_{21}$  and  $P_{22}$ . Thus even the set of first-grade secondary parts described in this way fails to fulfil



the conditions of being a grade in a determining-correspondence hierarchy.

Moreover, it is plain that this method provides no uniform plan of describing the lower and lower sub-divisions without end. To describe the parts of the next grade we should have to introduce a third pair of opposed non-geometrical characteristics, e.g., hot and cold. We should have, e.g., the hot part of the sweet part of the blue primary body, the cold part of the sour part of the red primary body, and so on. But the very essence of a determining-correspondence hierarchy is that it provides a *uniform* method of describing sufficiently each term of each grade, using no factors beside the *one* determining-correspondence relation and the characteristics which sufficiently describe the *primary* parts.

I think, then, that we can safely agree with McTaggart's contention that there cannot be a determining-correspondence hierarchy for the spatial sub-divisions of Matter, in which the primary parts are described solely by means of the non-geometrical constituents of materiality and the determining-correspondence relation is also non-geometrical.

Moreover, McTaggart contends, even if this difficulty could be avoided, there would be check-mate at the next move. For suppose that there were such a determining-correspondence hierarchy. Every term in every grade of the hierarchy would *in fact* have its own perfectly determinate *geometrical* qualities and relations. It would be a bit of matter, and so it would have a perfectly determinate shape, size, and position. Now these characteristics would not be conveyed by the non-geometrical qualities and relations which it has in virtue of its position in the hierarchy. But, as we know, McTaggart claims to have shown that there must be some grade in any determining-correspondence hierarchy such that every term in every grade below this one has *only* characteristics which are conveyed by its position in the hierarchy.

Accordingly, McTaggart now dismisses the alternative which we have been discussing. He proceeds to consider whether there could be a determining-correspondence hierarchy for the spatial sub-divisions of Matter, in which the

primary parts are described by geometrical as well as non-geometrical qualities and the determining-correspondence relation is geometrical. He holds that this suggestion must be discussed both on the hypothesis that space is relative and on the hypothesis that it is absolute. We will therefore begin by considering McTaggart's account of these two alternatives.

In §358 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart says that "if we take space to be relative, then all spatial qualities of Matter are relational qualities which arise from the relationship of one piece of matter with another". This does not seem to me to be true. I should have thought that, even on the relational view of space, the shape and the size of a bit of matter would be qualities of it which are not derived from its relations to other bits of matter or to anything else. Surely the question whether space is relative or absolute is a question about the nature of *position*.

In §359 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart says that the theory of absolute space might conceivably take either of two alternative forms. The usual form of the theory is that space "is made up of indivisible points". But McTaggart thinks that another alternative is possible. "The units of such a space might be, not indivisible points, but areas, each of which, as an ultimate fact, possessed a certain size and shape, and stood in certain relations to all the other areas." I think it is evident that "areas" is a slip or a misprint for "volumes"; but I do not suppose that it would make any difference to the general discussion of the theory if we considered a two-dimensional space whose units are areas instead of a three-dimensional space whose units are volumes.

I think that there is a good deal of uncertainty and confusion in McTaggart's statements about the theory of relative space and the two alternative forms of the theory of absolute space. I also think that a remark thrown out by W. E. Johnson on p. 165 of Part II of his *Logic* throws a flood of light on these questions. I propose, therefore, to try to state the alternatives in my own way with the help of Johnson's distinctions.

Consider the proposition that a certain body *B* has a

certain position at a certain moment. (a) We can first raise the question whether this proposition ascribes a *pure quality* to *B* or a *relational property*. (b) If it ascribes a relational property to *B*, we can raise the question whether the other term of the relation is other *bodies*, *B'*, *B''*, etc., or whether it is a particular of a peculiar kind, viz., a point or area or volume of Absolute Space. (c) If the other term of the relation be a particular of this peculiar kind, we can raise the question whether *its* position is a pure quality of it or a relational property in which the other term is other points or areas or volumes of Absolute Space. Thus, as Johnson points out, there are two different questions which cross each other. One is the question whether position is a pure quality or a relational property. The other is the question whether position belongs to material things *directly*; or whether it belongs primarily to particulars of another kind, viz., the parts of a peculiar substance called "Absolute Space", and only in a derivative sense to material things in virtue of their occupation of parts of Absolute Space. Johnson thinks that the former question may properly be put in the form: "Is spatial position absolute or relative?" whilst the latter may properly be put in the form: "Is space adjectival or substantival in character?" The two questions have never been clearly distinguished by protagonists in the controversy about "Absolute" versus "Relative" space.

We will now state the alternatives for ourselves. We begin by dividing possible theories into (1) Substantival, and (2) Adjectival. The essential features of all forms of substantival theory are the following. There are particulars which together form a single complex particular called Space. These and only these have spatial characteristics in the primary and underived sense. And each of them has *timelessly* or *sempiternally* all the spatial qualities and relational properties which it has. It is meaningless to talk of a point of Space, in this sense, changing its position; or of a volume of Space, in this sense, changing its size or shape. Now, in addition to Space and its parts, there are Material Things. Each of these at any moment *occupies* a certain part of Space. At different moments the

same material thing may occupy the same or different parts of Space. The statement that a certain material thing has at a certain moment a certain position, shape, and size is always derivative and analysable. It means that *at this moment* this thing *occupies* a part of Space which *timelessly or sempiternally* has a certain position, shape, and size. Thus, material things can change in respect of their spatial characteristics; because they can occupy different regions of Space at different times, and these regions must differ timelessly or sempiternally in position and may differ timelessly or sempiternally in shape and size.

The essential features of all forms of adjectival theory are the following. The only subjects of spatial characteristics are material things or events. There is not another kind of particular called "Space" in addition to Matter. Consequently the spatial characteristics which a bit of matter has at any moment belong to it in a primary and underivative sense. There are, therefore, no timeless or sempiternal spatial characteristics. A body may happen to keep the same position, shape, and size for a long time; or it may happen to change quickly and continuously in respect of these characteristics. But there can be no question of analysing such a change into a relation of occupance to a series of different terms each of which has all its spatial characteristics timelessly or sempiternally.

We can now consider the other pair of opposites, viz., (1) Absolute, and (2) Relational. We can confine our attention to the characteristic of spatial position, since this is the one which has generally been considered in these controversies. I think that the absolute theory may be put most clearly as follows. There is a certain determinable *quality*, which we will call "Spatial Position". We might compare this to the determinable Sound-quality. The determinates under it form a continuous three-dimensional manifold of qualities, which may be compared (though the analogy must not be pressed in detail) with the manifold of determinate sound-qualities which can be arranged in respect of pitch, loudness, and timbre. Any two particulars which have simultaneously two



different determinate qualities under the determinable of Spatial Position will *ipso facto* stand to each other in certain relations of distance, direction, and so on; just as any two particulars which have simultaneously two different determinates under the determinable Sound-quality will *ipso facto* stand to each other in certain relations of harmony or disharmony, equality or inequality of loudness, and so on. Thus, *spatial relationships* are "founded upon" the determinate *positional qualities* of the related terms; just as musical relationships are founded upon the determinate sound-qualities of the notes struck.

The essential features of the relational theory are as follows. There is no *quality* of Spatial Position. The fundamental positional characteristics of any term are its *relations* of distance and direction to other terms. These relations are not founded upon qualities in the related terms, as the musical relations between notes are founded upon their determinate sound-qualities. To say that a certain particular has a certain position is just to state its relations of distance and direction to certain other particulars chosen arbitrarily as terms of reference.

It is evident, then, that four alternative theories are possible. They may be numbered and named as follows. (1·1) The Substantival Absolute Theory; (1·2) the Adjectival Absolute Theory; (2·1) the Substantival Relational Theory; and (2·2) the Adjectival Relational Theory. Newton's doctrine of Absolute Space is, I think, a form of the Substantival Absolute Theory. The ordinary doctrine of Relative Space is, I think, a form of the Adjectival Relational Theory. I do not know that anyone has seriously considered the Adjectival Absolute Theory or the Substantival Relational Theory. The latter is of no great interest for our present purpose, but it seems desirable to formulate the Adjectival Absolute Theory.

According to this theory the only particulars which have spatial characteristics are bodies or material particles. For the present we can confine our attention to the latter alternative. There is a determinable quality of Spatial Position, and under it there is a three-dimensional manifold of deter-

minate positional qualities. At each moment each material particle has one and only one of these determinate positional qualities. A given material particle at two different moments may have the same or different determinate positional qualities. At any given moment any two material particles will stand in a determinate relation of relative position, which is founded upon the determinate positional qualities possessed by each at this moment. Absolute motion of a material particle consists in its having, at each of a continuous series of moments, a different one of a continuous series of positional qualities. Absolute rest of a material particle consists in its having, at each of a continuous series of moments, the same positional quality. Relative motion of one material particle with respect to another entails that at least one of them is in absolute motion; but the same relative motion can arise in connexion with very different absolute motions of the two particles concerned. I think that Leibniz's theory of "points of view", and his analysis of apparent motion or rest in terms of the change or the constancy of the points of view of two or more monads, bears a close analogy to this theory.

It will be remembered that McTaggart says that the theory of absolute space may take two different forms, one of which would hold that Space is composed of indivisible points, and the other of which holds that "the units of such a Space might be . . . areas, each of which, as an ultimate fact, possessed a certain size and shape, and stood in certain relations to all other areas". Substituting, as we obviously must do, "volumes" for "areas", we can now see that there is a corresponding pair of alternatives for each of the four theories which we have distinguished. On the substantival theory, whether it be absolute or relational, the compound particular, Space, may be composed either of unextended points or of minimal volumes. On the adjectival theory, whether it be absolute or relational, the compound particular, Matter, may be composed either of unextended material particles or of extended atoms.

Each type of theory is easier to state on the assumption that there are punctiform particulars, whether purely geometrical

or material, than on the opposite assumption. The reason is the same in all cases. A punctiform particular can and must have a single perfectly determinate quality of spatial position, on the absolute view; and a pair of punctiform particulars can and must stand in a single perfectly determinate relation of distance, direction, etc., on the relational view. But, if the terms are themselves extended, it is meaningless to talk of "*the* positional quality" of a term, and it is meaningless to talk of "*the* distance between" two terms. Such difficulties can be removed by introducing rather elaborate logical constructions, such as Whitehead uses in his method of Extensive Abstraction; so there is no need for us to do more than mention them.

Now it is evident that, if any of the four theories were true in the form which involves punctiform particulars, McTaggart's case would be made out at the first move. For, according to him, *every* particular must be endlessly divisible in *at least one* dimension. Now a punctiform particular has no parts in the *spatial* dimension. Therefore it would have to have some non-spatial characteristic in respect of which it is endlessly divisible and obeys the determining-correspondence condition. The only characteristic, which we know of or have any means of conceiving, that would fulfil these conditions is one that can belong only to particulars which are *spiritual*. And no particular which is spiritual could also be spatial. Therefore, although we cannot "rigidly demonstrate" the impossibility of punctiform particulars, we can say that experience provides us with no materials for conceiving how the conditions could be fulfilled without which such particulars are impossible. They are therefore in a far worse position than "the Gorgons and the Harpies". So we can confine our attention henceforth to those forms of the four theories which do not involve punctiform particulars. This need not prevent us from talking of geometrical points or material particles, if convenient; provided that we admit that they are, as we say in Cambridge, "logical constructions out of" geometrical volumes or bodies and their positional qualities or spatial relations.

McTaggart claims to prove in §360 that, neither on the hypothesis of relative space nor on that of absolute space, could there be a determining-correspondence hierarchy for the spatial sub-divisions of Matter, in which the primary parts are described by geometrical as well as non-geometrical characteristics and the determining-correspondence relation is geometrical.

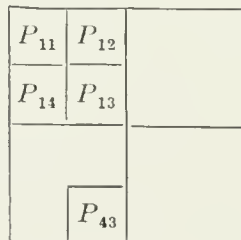
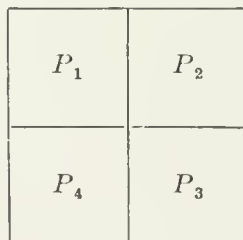
His argument is by no means easy to follow, and therefore I propose to take the following course. I shall first show, by an actual example, that it *is* possible, by use of a mixture of geometrical and non-geometrical characteristics, to conceive an endless descending hierarchy of spatial parts in which every term, however small, can be sufficiently described on a uniform plan. It is true that the hierarchy is not a determining-correspondence hierarchy as defined by McTaggart. But this does not help his case. It merely confirms what we have already shown on pp. 375 to 378 of Vol. I of the present work, viz., that McTaggart was mistaken in thinking that determining correspondence, as defined by him, is the *only* way in which sufficient descriptions of parts within parts without end can be generated on a uniform plan. When I have worked out my example I shall consider whether his argument in §§357 to 360 constitutes any objection to it. In my example I shall take, for the sake of simplicity, a two-dimensional space, and shall talk of areas instead of volumes. It will be quite obvious, however, that, if my example will work for areas, it can be extended without any fundamental change to volumes.

Let us assume that Matter is spatially two-dimensional and that it is a super-primary whole consisting of a number of primary wholes *P*, *Q*, *R*, etc. Each of these primary wholes is square; and we will suppose that they are all of the same area, though this is not essential. Each of these primary wholes is of a different colour. We will suppose that *P* is red, *Q* is blue, *R* is green, and so on. We can now confine our attention to a single one of them, viz., *P*, the red primary whole. Let us assume that *P* is divided into four adjoined equal squares, each of which will therefore be one-quarter of the area of *P*.

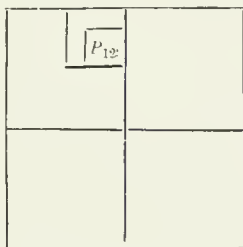


One of these is pink, one is russet, one is scarlet, and the remaining one is vermilion. We will call them respectively,  $P_1$ ,  $P_2$ ,  $P_3$ , and  $P_4$ . Each is uniformly coloured throughout its area. These constitute a set of primary parts of  $P$ . Similar remarks will apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to  $Q$ ,  $R$ , etc.  $Q$  will have a set of four equal square primary parts, each of which is homogeneously coloured with a different shade of blue. And so on.

I will now proceed to describe a set of sixteen secondary parts of the first grade of  $P$ . Consider  $P_1$ . This has a set of four equal square parts, each of which is one-quarter of the area of  $P_1$  and all of which are of the same uniform shade of pink. Now one and only one of these occupies in  $P_1$  the same relative position as  $P_1$  occupies in  $P$ . Call it  $P_{11}$ . Then the characteristic of "being a square quarter of  $P_1$  which occupies in  $P_1$  the same relative position as  $P_1$  occupies in  $P$ " is an *exclusive* description. And it can be made into a *sufficient* description by substituting for the symbols in it the sufficient descriptions of the terms which they symbolise. Thus  $P_{11}$  is *sufficiently* described as "the square quarter of the pink square quarter of the red primary whole which occupies in the former the same relative position as the former occupies in the latter". It is obvious that all the other fifteen first-grade secondary parts of  $P$  can be sufficiently described in the same kind of way. Let us take  $P_{43}$  as an example. It can be *exclusively* described as "the square quarter of  $P_4$  which occupies in  $P_4$  the same relative position as  $P_3$  occupies in  $P$ ". It can therefore be sufficiently described as "the square quarter of the vermilion square quarter of the red primary whole which occupies in the former the same relative position as the scarlet square quarter of the red primary whole occupies in the latter". The diagram below will make this plain:



Let us now consider the second-grade secondary parts of  $P$ . It is evident that each of the sixteen first-grade secondary parts  $P_{11}, P_{12}, P_{13}, P_{14}; P_{21}, \dots P_{24}; P_{31}, \dots P_{34}; P_{41}, \dots P_{44}$ , will have a set of four square quarters. These sixty-four squares will be a set of parts of  $P$ . Take any one at random, say  $P_{123}$ . This can be *exclusively* described as "the square quarter of  $P_{12}$  which occupies in  $P_{12}$  the same relative position as  $P_3$  occupies in  $P$ . But we have already seen how to give a *sufficient* description of  $P_{12}$  and of  $P_3$ . Therefore we can convert the exclusive description of  $P_{123}$  into a sufficient description by substituting in it the sufficient descriptions of the terms symbolised by  $P_{12}$  and  $P_3$ . The diagram below will make this plain:



It is now evident that every part in each of an unending series of sets of parts of  $P$  can be sufficiently described by this method. Therefore Matter might conceivably be endlessly divisible in the spatial dimension without leading to the contradictions which, according to McTaggart, would be entailed by endless divisibility in the absence of such a hierarchical arrangement. It is evident that the example could be extended to the actual three-dimensional case by making the primary wholes,  $P, Q, R$ , etc., into coloured *cubes* instead of coloured squares, and making the primary parts of any such primary whole into *eight equal cubes* of different shades instead of four equal squares.

Nor would our example be open to the objection that at every stage of the hierarchy the parts would have to have some characteristics which are not entailed by their position in the hierarchy. They need have no *non-geometrical* qualities beside their colours. Now the shade of every secondary part is identical with that of the primary part within which it falls.

E.g., every term in the hierarchy for  $P$  whose symbol is of the form  $P_1, \dots$  is of a certain one shade of pink. For it is a part of  $P_1$ , and, by hypothesis,  $P_1$  has a certain uniform shade of pink throughout. As regards the *geometrical* characteristics of the secondary parts, these reduce to shape, size, position, and orientation. Now the shape and size of any secondary part of  $P$  are given directly in the description of that part. All are square in shape. The area of any  $n$ th grade secondary part of  $P$  is  $(\frac{1}{4})^{n+1}$  of the area of  $P$ . The *relative* position of any part in the hierarchy with respect to  $P$  is also given by the description. So, if the absolute position and orientation of  $P$  are given, the absolute positions and orientations of all its parts in the hierarchy are entailed.

It might be said that we have no empirical evidence for the supposition that Matter is a super-primary whole composed of primary wholes of various colours, each primary whole being cubical and composed of eight equal cubes of different shades of the same colour. This is true, but irrelevant. We have also no direct empirical evidence for the supposition that there is a hierarchy of minds and  $\omega$ -prehensions of the peculiar kind which McTaggart postulates in order to fulfil the two conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence. The utmost that McTaggart can claim in its favour is that experience provides us with the materials for conceiving such a hierarchy of minds and  $\omega$ -prehensions. But it is equally true that experience provides us with the materials for conceiving a hierarchy of material things and their spatial parts, such as I have been explaining. Indeed, we have to depart much further from the data of experience to conceive McTaggart's spiritual hierarchy than we need to do in order to conceive my material hierarchy. For we have to think of minds which prehend themselves and each other and their own and each other's prehensions; which prehend nothing else; and which are wholly made up of such prehensions. Now it is admitted that ordinary experience supplies us with nothing in the least like this. Many people would say that they find it impossible to make the supposition which is asked of them. But there is nothing fantastic or outlandish

in the notion of differently coloured cubes, each sub-divided into eight equal cubes of different shades. And this is all that we are asked to conceive in my example about Matter. Moreover, it is not essential that the non-geometrical quality should be colour. Any extensible quality will do, provided that there are determinates under it like the various colours, and that there are determinates under each of these like the various shades of a single colour.

I can find nothing in McTaggart's arguments in §§357 to 360 to show that my suggestion is impossible. The only relevant statement is the assertion in §359 that different parts of a *homogeneously* coloured area could not be exclusively described and distinguished from each other on a uniform plan by means of their geometrical qualities and relations. He tries to support this in §360 by an argument which begins with the statement "I submit that it belongs to the nature of space that nothing spatial can be discriminated from anything else, in respect of its spatial qualities, except by means of descriptions of its parts." I do not think it is necessary for me to go into the argument, since my example appears to solve *ambulando* any difficulties that McTaggart raises, and to show that they are groundless.

I conclude, then, that McTaggart's argument against the possibility of extended particulars, whether material or sensal, breaks down at the fourth step in my synopsis of it, even if we accept the conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence. He has produced no conclusive reason, even on his own principles, for the conclusion that no particular is really material and that no particular is really sensal.

1.12. *Temporal Extension*. McTaggart discusses the question whether Matter could have an endless hierarchy of temporal parts, of the required kind, in §§361 and 362 of *The Nature of Existence*.

I must begin by entering my usual protest. If time were real, the successive phases in the history of a continuant, such as a bit of matter, would not be parts of *that continuant*. They would be parts of *its history*. So, if a bit of matter has to be endlessly divisible in at least one dimension, and we are



looking for a dimension in which this condition can be fulfilled consistently with the principle of determining correspondence, we can be quite certain at the outset that time is not the dimension that we need. Its *history* may be endlessly divisible in time, but *it* is not temporally divisible at all.

McTaggart opens §362 with a very extraordinary remark. He says, quite truly, that spatial characteristics are included in the definition of materiality, so that anything which lacked them could not properly be called "material". He then adds the following remark. "But it is by no means so certain that anything which had size, shape, and position, would not be called matter, if it was shown not to be really *mobile*, but only apparently *mobile*" (my italics). I call this an extraordinary remark for the following reason. Either it is completely irrelevant, or it is meant to suggest that temporal characteristics, unlike spatial characteristics, are no part of the definition of materiality. I assume that this was McTaggart's intention. But, if so, why should he think that the fact that *mobility* might be omitted from the definition of materiality had any tendency to show that *temporality* is no part of the notion of materiality? Temporality is involved just as much in the notion of staying perpetually in one place as in the notion of being movable from one place to another. The truth seems to be this. A bit of matter is conceived as a continuant of a certain specific kind; and the generic notion of continuant does involve temporality, since a continuant is defined as a particular which has a history, which persists through time, which has more or less permanent dispositional properties, and so on. Temporality is not mentioned explicitly in the definition of materiality, simply because it is presupposed in the generic notion which this definition proceeds to specify. Therefore temporality is involved in the notion of materiality, whether mobility be involved in it or not; but it is involved in a different way and on a different level from spatiality.

McTaggart holds that, if temporality were not a delusive characteristic, the arguments by which he has tried to show that endless spatial divisibility cannot be reconciled with the principle of determining correspondence could be applied

straightway to it. This seems to be true. But it is not very important, for two reasons. In the first place, the arguments are invalid, as I have tried to show in the sub-section immediately before this. Secondly, he claims to prove, quite independently of considerations about endless divisibility and determining correspondence, that temporality is a delusive characteristic. Since, then, no particular can be temporal, no particular can be endlessly divisible in respect of its temporal characteristics.

As we have already mentioned, and as we shall see in detail later, McTaggart holds that there are certain series of timeless terms which, when misprehended as temporal, are prehended as series of successive phases in the histories of continuants. Therefore the only question that remains for discussion under the present heading is the following. Granted that the particulars which we take to be material or sensal cannot really be either continuants or occurrents, since they cannot really be temporal, could they, nevertheless, be endlessly divisible in that non-temporal dimension which we misprehend as time? Could the timeless terms of that real series which we misprehend as the history of a bit of matter be endlessly divisible in that dimension in which they form this non-temporal series? If so, there is no reason why the particulars which we take to be bits of matter or visual sensa should not have the geometrical and the extensible characteristics which they appear to have, even if McTaggart's arguments about extension are valid. For it is not necessary that a particular should be endlessly divisible in *more than one* dimension. Therefore, if these particulars could fulfil the conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence in the non-temporal dimension which we misprehend as time, we could allow them not to be endlessly divisible in space. We could allow them to be composed either of a finite number of minimal extended elements or of an infinite number of punctiform elements. And McTaggart's arguments against spatial extension, even if valid, apply only on the supposition that extended particulars have *no* ultimate spatial elements whether minimal or punctiform.

McTaggart professes to dispose of this last expedient for saving ostensible matter and ostensible sensa in §362 of *The Nature of Existence*. His argument is as follows. The timeless terms of a non-temporal series which appears, *sub specie temporis*, as the history of a bit of matter or of a sensum, must have certain qualities beside those which are misprehended as date, duration, and temporal relations. For such a series is prehended as a series of events of a certain specific kind, e.g., as the motion of a certain bit of red matter of spherical shape. Again, the different timeless terms of such a non-temporal series must have *different* determinate qualities. For such a series is prehended as a process of *qualitative change* in a persistent continuant. Now, if the particular in question really is material or sensal, these qualities must be geometrical characteristics, such as shape, size, and position, and extensible qualities, such as colour, temperature, etc. Now, McTaggart says, "we saw, when we were discussing space, that these qualities will give no ground for the differentiation of matter into parts of parts to infinity". He concludes from this that, in respect of the real non-temporal series which we misprehend as a series of events in the history of a bit of matter or a sensum, "there can be no differentiation . . . into parts of parts to infinity".

I must confess that I cannot follow this argument. It seems to me to be completely irrelevant. We are no longer concerned with the question whether particulars could fulfil the conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence in respect of their spatial and extensible characteristics. We are content to suppose that, in their spatial dimensions, they consist of ultimate elements which are of minimal extension or are punctiform. The question at issue is whether the timeless terms which appear, *sub specie temporis*, as events in the history of a bit of matter or a sensum, could be endlessly divisible and obey the determining-correspondence condition in respect of that dimension which we misprehend as *temporal*. How can it be relevant to hark back to the contention that they cannot fulfil these two conditions in respect of their *spatial* dimension?

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### McTAGGART'S FORM OF MENTALISM AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

In this chapter I shall take together Chaps. xxxviii, xxxix, and xlii of *The Nature of Existence*, since they are very closely connected with each other.

#### 1. McTaggart's Form of Mentalism.

There seem, *prima facie*, to be particulars of at least three kinds, viz., material things and physical events, minds and experiences, and *sensa*. Now McTaggart claims to have proved the following propositions about them.

(i) That the conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence could be fulfilled by minds and certain experiences, provided that these minds and these experiences had certain qualities and stood in certain relations. These provisions have been formulated; and McTaggart has tried to show that they are not *inconsistent with* the general nature of minds and experiences, as revealed to us by introspection, though it must be admitted that our minds and experiences do not seem *prima facie* to have the required characteristics. (ii) That experience provides us with no materials for conceiving a determining-correspondence hierarchy of any other kind than one in which the primary parts are minds; in which the secondary parts are  $\omega$ -prehensions in these minds of themselves, of each other, and of their own and each other's  $\omega$ -prehensions; and in which the determining-correspondence relation is that of prehension to prehensum. (iii) In particular that, if there were material things or *sensa*, they could not obey the conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence in respect of their spatial, temporal, or extensible characteristics, either severally or collectively. (iv) That spatial and spiritual characteristics are incompatible; and



therefore that particulars which were material or sensal could not fulfil the conditions by possessing spiritual characteristics in addition to their material or sensal characteristics. (v) That, therefore, no particular can be a material thing or a sensum unless it has, beside its material or sensal characteristics, some other dimension which our experience provides us with no materials for conceiving and which enables it to fulfil the two conditions in some unknowable way. (vi) That we may dismiss without further consideration an alternative which we have no means of conceiving even in outline, and may henceforth assume that no particulars *are* material or sensal, though many are *prehended as* sensal and many are *perceptually accepted as* material.

Now we may give the name "Mentalism" to the doctrine that all particulars are mental or spiritual and that none are material or sensal. McTaggart uses the name "Idealism"; but he remarks that "Spiritualism" or "Psychism" would be better names, if it were not that the former is already used in a different sense and that the latter might have misleading associations with psychology. It is odd that he did not think of Sidgwick's proposal to use "Mentalism" to denote the contrary opposite of Materialism. It has always seemed to me that this is an excellent name; and so I shall say that McTaggart's doctrine is a form of Mentalism. We must now consider some of its peculiarities.

In the first place, it is based on ontological considerations, like Leibniz's mentalism, and not on epistemological ones, like Berkeley's. Again, it resembles Leibniz's theory in that the universe has a set of primary parts each of which is a self.

There are, however, two important points of unlikeness to Leibniz's theory. One is that there is nothing in McTaggart's system corresponding to Leibniz's doctrine of descending hierarchies of ruling monads and organisms. According to Leibniz, there is a certain asymmetrical relation in which *every* monad stands to a certain *group of monads*, and every different monad stands in this relation to a different group of monads. This is the relation of being the ruler of an organism.

There are certain monads, viz., angelic and human souls, which are rulers of organisms but are not themselves members of the organism of any ruling monad. Each such unrulèd ruler comes at the head of a certain descending hierarchy of monads. For every member in the group which it rules is also the ruler of a group of lower monads. So, stretching endlessly downwards from each unrulèd ruler, there is a hierarchy of subordinate monads; and the number of monads in each grade of such a hierarchy is greater than that in the grade immediately above it. There is obviously a certain superficial analogy between this and McTaggart's determining-correspondence hierarchies. But there is no real likeness. Each of Leibniz's organic hierarchies starts with *a single* monad, viz., one unrulèd ruler. Each of McTaggart's determining-correspondence hierarchies must start with *at least two* selves, in order to provide each self with a differentiating group. Again, all the terms in every grade of a Leibnitian organic hierarchy are *selves*. But in a determining-correspondence hierarchy all the secondary parts, of whatever grade, are  $\omega$ -prehensions and not selves.

The other important difference is this. In Leibniz's system there is an existent, viz., God, which stands outside the whole system of monads. The monads were created and fitted together into their hierarchies by God, and they depend on him for their continuance. McTaggart's system, as we shall see in detail later, is essentially atheistic. As they really are, all the selves are eternal. And, *sub specie temporis*, every self is sempiternal. The determining-correspondence system depends on nothing outside itself either for the origin of its terms, or for their arrangement, or for their maintenance.

In spite of these important differences, McTaggart's form of mentalism is, I think, much more akin to Leibniz's than to that of any other philosopher that I know of. I am inclined to think that a judicious synthesis of Leibniz and McTaggart would be a much more satisfactory system of speculative philosophy than either of its elements taken separately. Leibniz's childish theology might be thrown overboard with a sigh of relief. On the other hand, McTaggart makes no

attempt to deal with the facts which underlie spatial, dynamical, organic, and psycho-physiological appearances. Leibniz's theory of points-of-view and of rulership is at least a serious attempt to reconcile these appearances with mentalism.

In Chap. XLII of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart enumerates various ways in which the selves which are the primary parts of the universe might be dissimilar to each other. He concludes that we have no means of deciding between the various possibilities.

The barest and most external distinction between selves would be the following. A certain self  $P_1$  might be distinguished from a great many other selves by having a differentiating group of exactly  $m$  members. Again, it might be distinguished from all other selves whose differentiating groups have  $m$  members by the fact that one member of *its* differentiating group has a differentiating group with exactly  $n$  members. In that case  $P_1$  could be sufficiently described as "the self which has a differentiating group of  $m$  members, one of which has a differentiating group of  $n$  members". It is conceivable that every self could be sufficiently described in this purely numerical and external way. And it is conceivable that this might be the only kind of sufficient description available for some selves. There is, however, no reason to think that this is so.

Selves might be distinguished by differences of original quality. McTaggart thinks that there is not much room for variation among the determinable original qualities of selves. But, even if all selves have exactly the same determinable qualities, there is great room for variation in the intensities and other dimensions of these. It might be the case, e.g., that a certain self could be sufficiently described as "the self which is loved by all other selves". And every other self might be sufficiently described as "the self which loves with such and such an intensity the only self which is loved by all other selves".

McTaggart suggests that there might be qualitative dissimilarities, other than differences in emotional quality,

between the prehensions which different selves have of the same prehensum. He calls these "tone-qualities". He throws out the suggestion that, if each self has only a selection of all the other selves in his differentiating group, it may be that there is some special relation between the tone-quality of a given self's prehensions and the tone-qualities of the prehensions in the selves of his differentiating group. This relation might be similarity; but it might equally well be a kind of complementary dissimilarity.

## 2. Consequences of McTaggart's Mentalism.

Assuming that the only relation of determining correspondence which occurs in the universe is that of a prehension to its prehensum, what further conclusions can be drawn about selves and about determining correspondence? McTaggart discusses this question in Chap. xxxix of *The Nature of Existence*. The discussion falls into two parts. The first is concerned with general consequences; the second is concerned with the effect of the present assumption on certain alternatives which were left open in Vol. I of *The Nature of Existence*.

2.1. *General Consequences*. (i) Every primary part of the universe is a self.

(ii) Every self is a primary part of the universe. For suppose, if possible, that a certain self  $S$  is not a primary part of the universe. The primary parts of the universe are a set of parts of it. So anything that is not a primary part must either be contained in one of the primary parts or must have a set of parts each of which is contained in one or other of the primary parts. But all the primary parts are selves. So, on the first alternative, the self  $S$ , which is supposed not to be a primary part, would have to be contained in some self which is a primary part. But it is impossible for one self to be part of another; so this alternative must be rejected. On the second alternative, the self  $S$ , which is supposed not to be a primary part, would have to have parts in common with certain other selves which are primary parts. But it is impossible for any two selves to have any part in common; so this alternative must also be rejected. Therefore the supposi-



tion that *S* is not a primary part must be rejected. Thus we are entitled to say that, if all primary parts of the universe are selves, all selves are primary parts of the universe.

Now this conclusion is a rather embarrassing one. It follows that my self, and my cat's self, and the selves of lice, tapeworms, amoebae, and so on, are all primary parts of the universe. Now my self and all the selves that I know of appear to differ in four important respects from any self that could be a primary part in a determining-correspondence hierarchy. (a) They all seem to have other kinds of cogitation beside prehension. (b) They all seem to be in time. (c) None of them seems toprehend any other, or the experiences of any other, of them. And each of them does seem toprehend many particulars which are ostensibly neither selves nor experiences nor groups whose members are either selves or experiences or both. (d) Their prehensions do not seem to be divided into other prehensions without end. McTaggart honestly states and insists upon these difficulties. He defers to Book VI of *The Nature of Existence*, which treats of Error, the question whether a self which had the nature required of a primary part could misprehend itself and other selves in these respects. We must also defer this question till we deal with that part of his work.

(iii) The universe cannot be a self. This result follows, however, on McTaggart's principles, from the much less sweeping premise that there is at least one self in the universe. For, if this be granted and if the universe were a self, one self would contain another as a part. And this is impossible in McTaggart's opinion. I have discussed this doctrine under heading vi in Sub-section 2.1 of Chap. xxx p. 153 of the present volume. I tried there to show, by means of a geometrical analogy, that it is not inconceivable that there should be a single world-soul which stands to the various finite selves in some such relation as that which relates the surface of a sphere to the various great-circles upon it.

(iv) There must be more than one self. For, in order to have a determining-correspondence hierarchy, there must be a set of at least two primary parts. Now all the primary parts

of the universe are selves. Therefore there must be at least two selves. Thus does McTaggart refute Solipsism.

Solipsism may be defined as the doctrine that a person can be absolutely certain of the existence of *his* self and *his* experiences, but cannot be equally certain of the existence of any other particular. Like another vice, whose name begins with the same letter, it is more often imputed than committed. A philosopher is felt to have scored a point if he can show that another philosopher "ought logically to be a Solipsist". Now it is obvious that Solipsism might be attacked in two different ways, since it is a conjunction of two different propositions. (a) One might try to show that a person *is not* justified in being absolutely certain at any moment of the existence of his self or of any of his experiences which are not then present. Or (b) one might try to show that a person *is* justified in believing with complete certainty in the existence of other particulars beside his self and his experiences.

Bradley tries to refute Solipsism by the first method. According to him, a person does notprehend his self any more than he prehends other selves or material things. Each man's belief in the existence of his self, of his own past experiences other than those which he is remembering at a given moment, of material things, and of other selves and their experiences is *epistemologically* derivative. It may be *psychologically* immediate, in the sense of being non-inferential. But it is a form of perceptual acceptance; and, as such, it is always open to question. I should accept this contention, so far as it goes. But I should consider it important to ask whether a person's belief in the existence of himself and of some of his past experiences, though epistemologically derivative, might not be better founded and more probable than his epistemologically derivative belief in the existence of material things or of other selves and their experiences.

McTaggart, of course, cannot use this argument, since he holds that each human self prehends itself as such. His argument is of the second form; and, if his premises be accepted, it is, I think, conclusive.

There is, however, another argument of the second kind

against Solipsism which McTaggart regards as almost conclusive. Each of us, beside prehending a certain particular as his self and prehending certain other particulars as his experiences, prehends certain particulars as *sensa*. If it were certain that the particulars which a self prehends as *sensa* are not states of that self, it would be certain that there are other particulars beside that self and its experiences. Now McTaggart holds that it is almost certain that the particulars which a self prehends as *sensa* are not states of that self. So this argument would be, for him, an almost conclusive refutation of Solipsism. But he naturally prefers his determining-correspondence argument, for two reasons. In the first place, some people would not admit the premise of the argument about *sensibilia*. And, secondly, even if the argument were valid, it would not prove to any self that there are other *selves*.

2.2. *Effect on Alternatives hitherto left open.* When dealing with determining correspondence in general in Vol. I of this work, we found that the mere fact that every particular must either be a member of a determining-correspondence hierarchy, or have a set of parts each of which is a member of such a hierarchy, left a great many possibilities open. The most important of these are explained and illustrated with diagrams in Chap. XXIV of the present work. The question now before us is whether the assumption that the only relation of determining correspondence in the universe is that of a prehension to its prehensum will exclude any of these possibilities. McTaggart considers, in Chap. XXXIX, the bearing of this assumption on eight questions which have so far been left open.

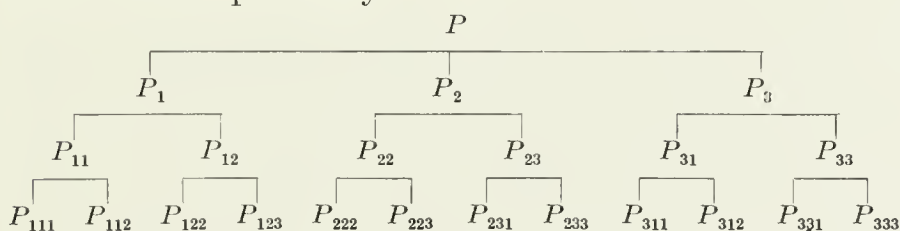
(i) It still remains an open question whether the number of primary parts of the universe is finite or infinite; i.e., on the present assumption, whether there is a finite or an infinite number of *selves*.

(ii) It still remains possible, and it is still not necessary, that each primary part should have for its differentiating group *all* the other primary parts. On the present assumption this means that it is possible that each self prehends every

self, and that it is equally possible that some or all selves fail toprehend some selves.

It is true that I do not seem to prehend *all* selves. But, then, it is equally true that I do not seem to prehend *any* self but my own. Now, on the present assumption, I must in fact prehend at least one other self. Since the appearances are certainly misleading to at least this extent, they may be misleading when it seems to me that I do not prehend all selves. The only relevant empirical fact is that my emotional relations towards some few selves seem to be very different from my emotional relations towards all other selves. This would be most easily explained by supposing that I prehend these few selves and no others. But here again the appearances may be deceptive.

(iii) It still remains possible that there should be primary parts to which no secondary part of any primary part stands in a relation of determining correspondence. On the present assumption this means that there may be selves which are not prehendend either by themselves or by any other self. Such a self would not be self-conscious; but there seems to be no objection to this. Moreover, even if every self be prehendend by some other self, it remains possible that no self is prehendend by any other self which it prehendend. E.g.,  $P_1$  might prehend himself and  $P_2$  and be prehendend by  $P_3$ ;  $P_2$  might prehend himself and  $P_3$  and be prehendend by  $P_1$ ; and  $P_3$  might prehend himself and  $P_1$  and be prehendend by  $P_2$ . The diagram below illustrates this possibility:



(iv) If  $R$  be any relation of determining correspondence, it is possible that, whilst no part of a certain primary part  $P_1$  stands in the relation  $R$  to a certain primary part  $P_3$ , yet there may be a part of  $P_1$  which stands in the relation  $R$  to a part of  $P_2$  which stands in the relation  $R$  to  $P_3$ . An example



would be the second-grade secondary part  $P_{123}$  in the above diagram. In such cases we may say that  $P_1$  is not *directly* determined by  $P_3$  but is *indirectly* determined by  $P_3$ .

What exactly would this mean if  $R$ , the relation of determining correspondence, be that of prehension to prehended object? McTaggart suggests that we must say, in this case, that  $P_1$  has an "indirect perception" of  $P_3$  though it has no "direct perception" of  $P_3$ . I have treated the subject of indirect perception in Section 2 of Chap. XXVI p. 55 of the present volume. It might well be that the greater part of any self's cognitions of other selves and their states consists of indirect perception. It is possible that each self indirectly perceives every self which it does notprehend. But, on the other hand, there is nothing to show that this must be or is in fact true.

(v) The assumption that the only determining-correspondence relation in the universe is that of a prehension to its prehensum does not enable us to decide whether the universe is a single primary whole or whether it is a super-primary whole composed of several primary wholes. Any pair of selves such that either prehends the other *must* belong to the same primary whole; but pairs of selves such that neither prehends the other *could* also belong to the same primary whole.

(vi) The present assumption of course excludes the possibility that there should be several different relations of determining correspondence either in different primary wholes or in a single primary whole.

(vii) It also excludes the possibility that the same primary whole might have two or more different sets of primary parts. For now all primary parts must be selves. Now any two sets of parts of the same whole must each exactly make up that whole. Therefore any member of the one set must have a set of parts each of which is contained in some member or other of the other set. But, since both sets of primary parts would consist of selves, this would involve that a part of one self is a part of another self. And, according to McTaggart, this is impossible.

(viii) The present assumption entails that any independent

characteristics which the members of a determining-correspondence hierarchy may have must be such as could belong to selves or to prehensions of selves or to prehensions of prehensions. And they must be such as could belong to selves which are non-temporal and have no cogitations except prehensions.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### OSTENSIBLE TEMPORALITY

McTaggart's doctrine of Time is absolutely fundamental to his system. It is the basis of his general theory of Error, and it is essential to the relatively optimistic conclusions which he reaches in Book VII of *The Nature of Existence*. Various parts of the theory are treated in several widely separated parts of Vol. II. In Book V, Chap. XXXIII, McTaggart gives his reasons for denying the reality of Time. The subject is then set aside till we come to Book VI, which deals with Error. The first eight chapters of Book VI are concerned with the positive characteristics of those real series which are misapprehended as series of events. The subject is then again set aside until we come to Book VII, in which McTaggart tries to draw from his theoretical principles certain consequences of great practical importance about the value and destiny of human beings. The first three chapters of Book VII complete the theory of Time by explaining its relations to Eternity. I propose to take the separated parts of McTaggart's exposition together, and thus to give a connected view of his complete theory of Time. This may be divided first into two parts, viz., a *Destructive* and a *Constructive Part*. The Constructive Part may be sub-divided into two sections, viz., *Time and Error*, and *Time and Eternity*. In this chapter I shall deal with the Destructive Part of the theory. The next Book will be devoted to the two sections of the Constructive Part.

I shall begin by stating in my own way what seem to me to be the fundamental peculiarities of temporal appearance. This will form a framework in which we shall be able to place McTaggart's own statements and our criticisms of them.

### 1. Independent Account of the Phenomenology of Time.

Consider the following sentences: "My grandfather died before I was born", "I am now writing", "I had my breakfast before I began writing this sentence, and I shall have my lunch after I have stopped writing." Everyone who understands English understands these sentences. Everyone is perfectly familiar with facts of the kind which I profess to be recording when I write them. And everyone knows that, even if I should happen to be mistaken or to be lying when I write these sentences, there are innumerable facts of the kind which I profess to be recording when I write them.

Let us now take, by way of contrast, some sentences which record non-temporal facts. The following are examples: "Twice two is four", "If anything were an equilateral triangle, it would be equiangular", "There is no pair of integers such that the ratio of their squares is the same as the ratio of 2 to 1", "37 is a prime number."

We will begin by dividing temporal facts into two classes, viz., those whose constituents all fall within the experience of a single individual, and those whose constituents are not thus restricted. Examples of the first class would be such facts as the following sentences ostensibly record: "I saw a bright flash, and almost immediately afterwards I heard a loud bang", "I have a pain now and it will get worse later on." The following sentences ostensibly record facts of the second kind: "I saw a bright flash shortly before you heard a loud bang", "A very bright comet was near the earth shortly before the Battle of Hastings", "In the remote future the earth will be too cold to support human life." We will call these two kinds of temporal fact "intra-subjective" and "trans-subjective" respectively.

It seems reasonable to believe that intra-subjective temporal facts are simpler and are logically more primitive than trans-subjective ones. It seems certain that each man's knowledge of trans-subjective temporal facts, or his belief in trans-subjective temporal propositions, is in some sense "based upon" his knowledge of temporal facts all of whose



constituents fall within his own experience. It will therefore be wise to begin by confining our attention to intra-subjective temporal facts.

The temporal characteristics of experiences fall into three different, though closely interconnected, sets. (i) Every experience has some duration. It is, in this respect, like a finite straight line and not like a geometrical point. It may be qualitatively variegated or qualitatively uniform throughout its duration, just as a line may vary in colour from one end to the other or be uniformly coloured throughout.

(ii) Any two experiences of the same person stand to each other in a certain determinate form of a determinable temporal relation. Since experiences are not instantaneous, these determinate forms of temporal relation cannot be reduced to the familiar three, viz., earlier than, simultaneous with, and later than. Many other possibilities must be recognised, e.g., earlier than and *not* adjoined to, earlier than *and* adjoined to, partly preceding and partly overlapping, and so on. It is needless to go into elaborate detail; the total number of possible determinate temporal relations between two experiences is finite and can easily be worked out. If *A* and *B* are two experiences of the same person, and no assumption is made about the relative durations of *A* and *B*, there are in fact just thirteen alternative possible relations in which *A* may stand to *B*. Of these, six are independent of the relative duration of *A* and *B*; one, viz., exact temporal coincidence without overlap, can hold only if *A* and *B* are of equal duration; three can hold from *A* to *B* only if *A* is shorter than *B*; and the remaining three can hold from *A* to *B* only if *A* is longer than *B*.

(iii) The third, and much the most puzzling, set of temporal characteristics are those which are involved in facts of the following kind. An experience is at one time wholly in the future, as when one says "I am going to have a painful experience at the dentist's tomorrow." It keeps on becoming less and less remotely future. Eventually the earliest phase of it becomes present; as when the dentist begins drilling one's tooth, and one thinks or says "The painful experience which

I have been anticipating has now begun." Each phase ceases to be present, slips into the immediate past, and then keeps on becoming more and more remotely past. But it is followed by phases which were future and have become present. Eventually the latest phase of this particular experience becomes present and then slips into the immediate past. There is the fact which one records by saying "Thank God (on the theistic hypothesis) that's over now!" After that the experience as a whole retreats continually into the more and more remote past.

There is no doubt that the sentences which I have just been quoting record facts, and that such facts are of the very essence of Time. But it is, of course, quite possible that the grammatical form of these sentences is highly misleading. It may dispose people to take for granted a certain view of the structure and the elements of these facts, and this view may be mistaken and may lead to difficulties and contradictions.

The two aspects of duration and temporal relations are very closely interconnected, and it is in respect of them that there is a close analogy between Time and Space. I shall therefore class them together under the name of "the Extensive Aspect of Temporal Facts". The third feature is absolutely peculiar to Time, and bears no analogy to any feature of spatial facts. I will call it "the Transitory Aspect of Temporal Facts". I will first take these two aspects separately, and will then consider the relations between them.

1.1. *The Extensive Aspect of Temporal Facts.* There is evidently a very close analogy between a person's mental history, taken as a whole, and a cord made up of shorter strands arranged in the following way. The shorter strands are all parallel to each other and to the axis of the cord. No strand stretches the whole length of the cord; the strands are of various lengths and the two ends of any one strand are in general at different positions, respectively, from the two ends of any other strand. Any short segment of the cord will contain segments of several overlapping strands; but two short segments of the cord at some distance apart may be composed of segments of wholly different strands. Some

strands may be practically uniform in colour and texture throughout their length. Others may vary greatly in colour or texture from one end to the other. The former correspond to monotonous experiences, and the latter to variegated and exciting experiences.

This spatial analogy is valid and useful up to a point; but I will now indicate some important ways in which it breaks down. (i) The triadic relation "between" occurs both in a linear spatial series and in a temporal series. We can say both that Bletchley is between Euston and Rugby, and that the experience of writing this sentence is between the experience of eating my breakfast and that of eating my dinner. Nevertheless, there is a profound difference. Temporal betweenness is not fundamental; it is analysable into the relational product of a certain *dyadic* relation taken twice over. The fundamental facts are that eating my breakfast *preceded* writing the sentence, and that writing the sentence *preceded* eating my dinner. The triadic relational fact that writing the sentence is between eating my breakfast and eating my dinner is analysable into the conjunction of these two dyadic relational facts.

Now in the linear spatial series the exact opposite is the case. No doubt one can say that Euston is south of Bletchley and that Bletchley is south of Rugby, and one can compare this with my breakfast preceding my writing the sentence and the latter preceding my dinner. But there is a fundamental difference. The relation "south of" tacitly involves a reference to some third term beside those which are explicitly mentioned, viz., to the sun or to a compass-needle. But the relation "earlier than" is a genuinely dyadic relation which directly relates two experiences of the same person and contains no tacit reference to some third term.

We may sum this up as follows. In a linear spatial series there is no asymmetric dyadic relation intrinsic to the series. The only relation which does not involve a tacit reference to some term outside the series is the partly symmetrical and partly asymmetrical *triadic* relation of "betweenness". This is partly symmetrical because, if *B* is between *A* and *C*, then

it is equally between *C* and *A*; and conversely. It is partly asymmetrical because, if *B* is between *A* and *C*, *C* cannot be between *A* and *B* and *A* cannot be between *B* and *C*. In the temporal series of experiences which constitutes a person's mental history there is a genuine dyadic relation which is intrinsic to the series and involves no reference to any term outside the latter. This is the relation "earlier than". It is the fundamental relation here, and *temporal* betweenness is definable in terms of it. In the temporal series there are two intrinsically opposite directions, earlier-to-later and later-to-earlier. In the linear spatial series there is no *intrinsic* direction. If direction is to be introduced, this must be done *extrinsically*, either by reference to motion along the line (and therefore to time), or by reference to the right and left hands of an external observer, or in some other way.

(ii) Spatial extension and the occurrence of spatial relations *presuppose* temporal duration and a certain determinate form of temporal relation. Shape and size are commonly ascribed to particulars which persist through periods of time and have histories of longer or shorter duration. Since, however, one and the same thing can have different determinate shapes and sizes at different times in its history, we have to divide its history into short successive phases during each of which its shape and size are sensibly constant. Thus we reach the limiting conception of "the shape and size of a certain thing at a certain moment". If the thing is very rigid and usually remains practically unchanged in shape and size over long periods, we often drop the reference to a particular moment and refer to the shape and size which it has at every moment throughout such a long period as "*the* shape and size of this thing". Again, if a thing is elastic, there may be a certain shape and size which it will automatically assume whenever it is free from external distorting or compressing forces. We sometimes refer to this as "*the* shape and size" or "the *natural* shape and size" of such a body, even though the body is at most moments in its history subject to external forces which distort or compress it. I think that it is clear from these remarks that the notions of shape and size, as applied to



bodies, all involve a tacit or explicit reference to temporal characteristics.

We do not very often apply the notions of shape and size to events or processes, as distinct from material things. But we do, e.g., talk of a "long jagged flash of lightning". I think that we talk in this way only when the event or process is so short as to be sensibly instantaneous.

Lastly, we talk of spatial relations between two events only when each is sensibly instantaneous and the two are simultaneous with each other. And we talk of spatial relations between two material things only when the following conditions are fulfilled. The histories of the two things must go on parallel to each other in time. Then each history must be divided into successive instantaneous states, and we must consider the spatial relations between the two bodies at each pair of simultaneous instants in their respective histories. Thus there is a rather elaborate and complicated temporal relation implied in talking of spatial relations between bodies.

Now contrast all this with the extensive aspect of temporal facts. Temporal relations *directly* relate *events or processes*; they do not directly relate the continuants of which events and processes constitute the histories. Again, it is the events or processes which are temporally extended, i.e., which are longer or shorter in the temporal sense. The continuants, of which these events or processes constitute the histories, *endure through* periods of time. And the period through which a continuant endures is measured by the length of its history. Lastly, it is evident that a temporal whole may be composed of parts which do not temporally overlap but are completely successive to each other. Consider a variegated process, such as a single rendering of a certain tune on a piano. It can be regarded as a whole composed of adjoined phases, each of shorter duration, such that each phase wholly precedes one, and wholly follows another, phase of the same process.

I think that I have now made it plain that the unlikeness between spatial and temporal facts is almost as striking as the likeness, even when we confine ourselves to the purely extensive aspect. So far as I can see, all spatial illustrations

even of the extensive aspect of temporal facts presuppose temporal notions. For our lines, etc., are all things which endure through certain periods and have longer or shorter temporal histories. This is no reason for refusing to use such illustrations, if we find them helpful. But it makes it certain that a point will be reached after which they can give us no further help.

1.2. *The Transitory Aspect of Temporal Facts.* We will now turn to the transitory aspect of temporal facts. Here there are two points to be considered, viz., (i) the characteristics of pastness, presentness, and futurity; and (ii) the fact that every event is continually changing in respect of these characteristics. It continually becomes less and less remotely future, then it becomes present, and then it continually becomes more and more remotely past.

The first remark to be made is concerned primarily with language, but it leads on to a conclusion which is not purely linguistic. In all the languages with which I am acquainted there are two different ways of recording such temporal facts as we are now considering. The most usual way is by means of differences of tense in inflected languages, or by means of a temporal copula, which can take three different forms, together with certain temporal adverbs. Thus I should most naturally say "I *had* my breakfast *lately*", "I *am* writing *now*", "I *shall be* eating my lunch *soon*", and so on. The other way is by means of a single uniform copula and temporal adjectives, which take three different forms, together with certain adverbs. Thus I might have said "Eating my breakfast is just past", "My writing is present", "Eating my lunch is slightly future", and so on. Such expressions are rather unnatural; but they are intelligible, and in some contexts they would be quite normal. Thus it sounds quite natural to say "The next glacial period is in the remote future." The various temporal copulas can be combined with the various temporal adjectives in many ways. Thus we can say "The invention of wireless broadcasting was still future when Queen Victoria died", "This spell of writing will be past (or over) when I am eating my lunch", and so on.

I come now to the point which is not purely linguistic. It is this. By using various forms of temporal adjective we may be able to reduce the number of forms of temporal copula needed in recording temporal facts to the single copula "is". We can, e.g., replace the sentence "I *was* eating my breakfast, I *am* writing, and I *shall be* eating my lunch" by the sentence "Eating my breakfast *is* past, this spell of writing *is* present, and eating my lunch *is* future." But the "is" is the temporal copula "is now", which a person would use if he said of me "He is now writing"; it is not the non-temporal copula which would be used if one said "37 is a prime number" or "Scarlet is a determinate form of red."

The following considerations make this quite plain. Suppose that, on a certain occasion, I utter the sentence "The event *e* is present." And suppose that this utterance records a fact. If the word "is" in it were a non-temporal copula, *every* utterance by me of the same sentence would record the same fact, no matter whether it were earlier than, contemporary with, or later than this utterance of mine. But actually the only utterances of this sentence which would record the same fact as this utterance of mine would be those which are *contemporary with* my utterance. Earlier or later utterances of this sentence would simply be false; though an earlier utterance of the sentence "The event *e* is future" would be true, and a later utterance of the sentence "The event *e* is past" would also be true. Similar remarks would apply, *mutatis mutandis*, if we had taken as our example a true utterance of the sentence "The event *e* is future" or a true utterance of the sentence "The event *e* is past." It is clear then that there can be no question of getting rid altogether of temporal copulas, and replacing them by a single non-temporal copula and various temporal predicates. This point is highly relevant in connexion with McTaggart's argument against the reality of Time.

1.21. *Pastness, Presentness, and Futurity.* I will now make some remarks about the three temporal characteristics of pastness, presentness, and futurity. The first point to notice is this. If we regard them as three determinates under a

single determinable, they are not on a level, as red, green, blue, etc., are when regarded as determinates under the determinable colour. Pastness and futurity are each capable of an infinite range of different degrees. Presentness is generally thought of as being incapable of variation in degree. (I am ignoring the doctrine of the "Specious Present" for the moment; I shall deal with it later.) Thus the three temporal characteristics are like the three determinates, hot, neutral, and cold, under the determinable of sensible temperature. If we want to put them on a level, we must take as our ultimate determinates presentness, the various determinate degrees of pastness, and the various determinate degrees of futurity.

When we do this, however, we are faced with the following complication. Any experience has some duration; it is like a line and not like a geometrical point. But neither presentness, in the strict sense, nor any absolutely determinate degree of pastness or futurity, can characterise a temporally extended term. Such a term cannot be *present* as a whole. If it is *past* as a whole, any earlier phase of it will have a greater degree of pastness than any later phase; and, if it is *future* as a whole, any earlier phase of it will have a less degree of futurity than any later phase. Thus the notions of strict presentness and of perfectly determinate degrees of pastness or futurity are inseparably bound up with the notion of strictly instantaneous terms, i.e., terms which have temporal position but no duration, and are analogous to geometrical points or unextended particles. I propose to call such terms "event-particles". I think that some event-particles are boundaries of events. And I think that we are able to form the conception of event-particles because we oftenprehend events as having boundaries. I will now try to explain what I mean by these cryptic utterances.

I will begin by taking a spatial parallel. Suppose I draw a line in blue ink on a sheet of white paper and look at it. Then I shallprehend a long thin blue sensum surrounded by a white sensum. Each of these is visibly extended in two dimensions; for the blue sensum, though thin, is visibly of some width. But, in addition, I have an experience which I



can only describe as "prehending the common boundary of the blue sensum and the white sensum". Such boundaries are, in the strictest sense, *lines*, i.e., terms which are extended in one and only one spatial dimension. Very likely the phrases which I have used to describe this experience are in some respects misleading; but I think that everyone will recognise the kind of experience which I am recording by means of them. I do not think that these "boundaries without breadth" are coloured, and I should not be prepared to call them "visual sensa". But anyone who prehends such visual sensa as I have been describing will, *ipso facto*, prehend such a boundary. I think that such experiences are the sensible basis of the notion of lines without breadth. Suppose now that I draw on the same sheet of paper a second ink-line which cuts the first. The two lines, being of finite thickness, intersect in a small *blue area*. But their boundaries, being of only one dimension, intersect in *four colourless points* which are at the four corners of this area. Unless the lines are very thick these four points are, of course, very near together. The thinner the lines, the nearer together are the four points in which their boundaries intersect each other. As the lines approach indefinitely near to zero thickness, the four points of intersection approach indefinitely near to coalescing in a single point. We express this, briefly and inaccurately, by saying that two coloured lines without breadth would intersect in a certain point with position and no magnitude.

Let us now pass from the spatial analogy to the temporal problem which is our main business. Consider the following example. A uniform background of sound has been going on for some time, e.g., the faint hissing of my gas-fire. Suddenly the clock begins to strike. The striking-experience and the hissing-experience both have duration. But it seems to me that, in some important sense of "hearing", I also "hear" the boundary between hissing-without-striking and hissing-with-striking. It seems to me that this has absolutely determinate temporal position in my experience but no temporal extension. I do not think that it has an auditory quality, in the sense in which the hissing and the striking have auditory

qualities, any more than the boundary between a blue sensum and a white sensum which surrounds it has a colour. I am inclined to think that the actual experience of temporal boundaries is the basis of the notion of event-particles.

Consider any process which is either qualitatively uniform or continuously varying in quality. An example of the first kind of process would be the hissing noise-process which is going on while I am hearing my gas-fire throughout the morning. An example of the second would be the noise-process which I hear when I stand on the platform of a railway station and an engine approaches whistling and runs past me. Here there is continuous variation both in loudness and in pitch. Such processes do not fall into successive temporally extended phases audibly adjoined at boundaries. The first may be compared to a uniformly shaded red band; the second may be compared to a red band which varies continuously in shade from one end to the other. Now consider a third kind of auditory experience. Suppose that we have a toothed wheel which can be made to rotate for a period with uniform velocity, and can be made to rotate at different times for the same period with different uniform velocities. Suppose that a card is held with its edge against the teeth of this wheel. Let the experiments which I am about to describe all be conducted against the uniform auditory background of the hissing of a gas-fire.

Let the wheel first be rotated fairly slowly with uniform velocity for a short period. Then I shall hear a discontinuous series of short qualitatively similar noises. Between each will come a short phase of hissing. Each click will be adjoined at its earlier and later ends to a phase of hissing, and the adjunction will audibly take place along a temporal boundary. Now repeat the experiment for the same period with the wheel being rotated uniformly but faster than before. There will be more clicks and more phases of hissing; and each click will be shorter and so too will be each intermediate phase of hissing. Thus the later boundary of any click will now be nearer in time to the earlier boundary of the next click. If this experiment is repeated with the wheel rotating faster and

faster on each occasion, a point will be reached at which the auditory experience changes in character. Instead of a discontinuous series of clicks, each with an audible boundary, there will be a continuous noise-process. We can think of the successive clicks as getting shorter and shorter and more and more numerous, and we can think of the intermediate phases of hissing as doing the same. Thus the later boundary of any click approaches nearer and nearer in temporal position to the earlier boundary of the next click. When the noise-process has become continuous we can think of the successive clicks as having approached to the limit of zero duration, and similarly for the intermediate hissing phases; and we can think of the later boundary of any click as having approached to the limit of coalescing with the earlier boundary of the next click. Thus we form the conception of a continuous uniform noise-process as consisting of a *compact* series of qualitatively similar *event-particles*, each with a different and absolutely determinate *temporal position* and without any *duration*. Similarly, we think of a continuously variable noise-process as consisting of a compact series of event-particles, each with its own absolutely determinate temporal position and sound-quality. The sound-qualities of any two such event-particles will be more and more alike the nearer together the event-particles are in respect of temporal position; and, as the difference in temporal position approaches zero as a limit, so the difference in sound-quality approaches zero as a limit.

I think that I have now given a fairly plausible account of the experiential basis of the notion of event-particles, and of the assumption that any process of finite duration can be regarded as consisting of a compact series of successive event-particles. It is evident that presentness, in the strict sense, and absolutely determinate degrees of pastness or futurity, belong only to event-particles and not to processes. But a process can be said to be past if its later boundary is past; and a process can be said to be more remotely past in proportion as its later boundary has a greater degree of pastness. Similarly, a process can be said to be future if its earlier boundary is future; and a process can be said to be more

remotely future in proportion as its earlier boundary has a greater degree of futurity.

1.22. *Absolute Becoming*. We must now consider the other feature in temporal facts to which there is no spatial analogy, viz., temporal becoming. People have often tried to explain or to represent this in terms of qualitative change or motion. It seems to me quite evident that all such attempts are doomed to failure. Qualitative change and motion presuppose qualitative or substantial persistence, and both presuppose temporal becoming. It will be worth while to consider this point rather more fully.

Let us begin with the attempt to represent temporal becoming by means of motion. Here we are supposed to have a series of event-particles related by the relation of earlier and later. This may be represented by a straight line, which may be uniformly shaded if the process is to be qualitatively uniform, or may be coloured with a continuously variable shade from one end to the other if the process is to be one of continuous qualitative change. The characteristic of presentness is then supposed to move along this series of event-particles, in the direction from earlier to later, as the light from a policeman's bullseye might move along a row of palings.

The following fatal objections can at once be raised. (i) If anything moves, it must move with some determinate velocity. It will always be sensible to ask "How fast does it move?" even if we have no means of answering the question. Now this is equivalent to asking "How great a distance will it have traversed in unit time-lapse?" But here the series along which presentness is supposed to move is temporal and not spatial. In it "distance" is time-lapse. So the question becomes "How great a time-lapse will presentness have traversed in unit time-lapse?" And this question seems to be meaningless.

(ii) Consider any event-particle in the series. At a certain moment this acquires presentness and then loses it again without delay. Before that moment it was future, afterwards it is past. Now the acquisition and the loss of presentness by



this event-particle is itself an event-particle of the second order, which happens to the first-order event-particle. Therefore every first-order event-particle has a *history* of indefinite length; and, at a certain stage of this there is one outstanding second-order event-particle, viz., the acquisition and the immediately subsequent loss of presentness. Yet, by definition, the first-order event-particle which we have been considering has no duration, and therefore can have no history, in the time-series along which presentness is supposed to move.

The two considerations which I have just mentioned would seem to make the following conclusion inevitable. If there is any sense in talking of presentness moving along a series of events, related by the relation of earlier-and-later, we must postulate a *second* time-dimension in addition to that in which the series is spread out. An event which has zero duration, and therefore no history, in the first time-dimension, will yet have an indefinitely long duration and a history in the second time-dimension. Let  $e_1$  and  $e_2$  be two first-order event-particles, and let  $e_1$  precede  $e_2$  by  $t$  units of the first time-dimension. Suppose that the second-order event-particle which is  $e_1$ 's acquirement of presentness precedes the second-order event-particle which is  $e_2$ 's acquirement of presentness by  $t'$  units of the second time-dimension. Then the velocity with which presentness moves along the original series will be measured by the ratio  $t/t'$ . The numerical value of this ratio is of no importance; it could always be given the value 1/1 by a suitable choice of the units in which we measure time-lapses in the two dimensions. The important point is that, whatever may be the numerical value, the ratio cannot possibly represent a rate of change unless its denominator measures a *lapse of time* and its numerator measures something *other than* a lapse of time in the same time-dimension.

Now let  $e_1, e_2, e_3$ , etc., be a series of event-particles of the first order, succeeding each other in the first time-dimension. Consider the following set of second-order event-particles, viz.,  $e_1$ 's acquirement of presentness,  $e_2$ 's acquirement of presentness,  $e_3$ 's acquirement of presentness, and so on. These might be denoted respectively by the symbols  $e_1^2, e_2^2, e_3^2$ , etc.

These will form a series of second-order event-particles which succeed each other in the second time-dimension. Now, just as  $e_1$  was future, became present, and then became past, so  $e_1^2$  (i.e.,  $e_1$ 's acquirement of presentness) was future, became present, and then became past. Again, just as  $e_1$  became present before  $e_2$  became present, so  $e_1^2$  (i.e.,  $e_1$ 's acquirement of presentness) became present before  $e_2^2$  (i.e.,  $e_2$ 's acquirement of presentness) became present. Lastly, just as  $e_1$  had ceased to be present when  $e_2$  had become present, so  $e_1^2$  (i.e.,  $e_1$ 's acquirement of presentness) had ceased to be present when  $e_2^2$  (i.e.,  $e_2$ 's acquirement of presentness) had become present. Thus the series of second-order event-particles,  $e_1^2, e_2^2, e_3^2$ , etc., in the second time-dimension, is precisely like the series of first-order event-particles,  $e_1, e_2, e_3$ , etc., in the first time-dimension, in all those respects which led people to say that presentness "moves along" the first-order series. Such people ought therefore to say, if they want to be consistent, that presentness "moves along" the second-order series too.

Now, if they do say this, we can show by exactly the same arguments as we used at the first stage that a *third* time-dimension must be postulated. Each second-order event-particle, such as  $e_1^2$ , must be supposed to endure indefinitely and to have a history in this third time-dimension. And the acquirement of presentness by  $e_1^2$  will be a third-order event-particle in the history of  $e_1^2$ . It could be symbolised by  $e_1^3$ , which thus stands for "the acquirement of presentness by the acquirement of presentness by  $e_1$ ". It is easy to see that the argument is quite general, and that there is no stage at which one could consistently stop in postulating further time-dimensions and events of a higher order.

It is a great merit of Mr J. W. Dunne, in his two books *An Experiment with Time* and *The Serial Universe*, to have insisted on what is substantially the same fact as this. Unfortunately he persuades himself, by false analogies with infinite series which have limits, that the regress is harmless and that it is sensible to postulate what he calls "the Observer at infinity". Actually the series which we have been con-

sidering could not have a last term or an upper limit, and so the conception of "the Observer at infinity" is the contradictory notion of the last term or upper limit of a series which, from its nature, could have neither. It may be remarked that Mr Dunne's attempted explanation of the alleged fact of pre-cognition, which is highly ingenious, does not require an unending series of time-dimensions. Any reader who is interested in this subject may be referred to my article, *Mr Dunne's Theory of Time*, in *Philosophy*, Vol. x, No. 38.

When one finds oneself launched on an endless series of this kind it is generally a sign that one has made a false move at the beginning. I think that it is easy to see what the false move is in this case. The phrase "to become present" is grammatically of the same form as the phrase "to become hot" or "to become louder". We are therefore tempted to think that sentences like "This event became present" record facts of the same kind as those which are recorded by sentences like "This water became hot" or "This noise became louder." Now a very little reflection is enough to show that this is a mistake.

Any subject of which we can significantly say that it "became hot" must be a more or less persistent substance, which persisted and had temperature before and after the date at which it became hot. The determinate form of its temperature was coldness for an earlier period and hotness for a later period, and the two periods are adjoined phases in its history. Again, any subject of which we can significantly say that it "became louder" must be a more or less prolonged noise-process, which divides into an earlier phase of less loudness adjoined to a later phase of greater loudness. But a literally *instantaneous* event-particle can significantly be said to "become present"; and, indeed, in the strict sense of "present" *only* instantaneous event-particles can be said to "become present". To "become present" is, in fact, just to "become", in an absolute sense; i.e., to "come to pass" in the Biblical phraseology, or, most simply, to "happen". Sentences like "This water became hot" or "This noise became louder" record facts of *qualitative change*. Sentences

like "This event became present" record facts of *absolute becoming*. Now it is clear that qualitative change involves absolute becoming, and it seems to me equally certain that absolute becoming is involved in mere continuance without qualitative change. It is therefore hopeless to expect to treat absolute becoming as if it were a particular case of qualitative change. The endless series of time-dimensions and of orders of events, which such an attempt involves, is the sign and the measure of its futility. I do not suppose that so simple and fundamental a notion as that of absolute becoming can be analysed, and I am quite certain that it cannot be analysed in terms of a non-temporal copula and some kind of temporal predicate.

1.3. *The Specious Present*. We have now considered separately the extensive and the transitory aspects of temporal facts. It remains to say something about the notion of the "Specious Present", which involves both these aspects. McTaggart makes considerable use of this notion, but he always takes for granted that there is some well-known and generally accepted doctrine on the subject. It seems to me that this assumption is dangerous and quite unjustified. I have never seen any account of the Specious Present which seemed even *prima facie* intelligible.

It is obvious that the psychologists who use this phrase are thinking of an important fact about temporal experience, but I find it extremely difficult to inspect and describe accurately the kind of situation which they denote by the phrase. I think that the fundamental fact here is that we have the two following kinds of contrasted experience. We can literallyprehend objects as changing and we can literallyprehend objects as persisting unchanged. Anyone who looks at the face of a watch which has a second-hand will have both kinds of experience going on side by side. The visual *sensa* which he perceptually accepts as the face and the hour-hand and the minute-hand will be prehended as resting; the visual *sensum* which he perceptually accepts as the second-hand will be prehended as jumping. Another pair of experiences, in which the change and the persistence which are prehended *do not*



take the forms of motion and rest respectively, are the following. I prehend the hissing of my gas-fire as a persistent unvarying noise-process. If I stand on a railway platform and an express train rushes through whistling, I prehend the whistling noise as changing in pitch when the engine passes me.

Now the two following propositions are commonly taken to be self-evident. (i) Neither persistence without qualitative change nor qualitative change can be ascribed to a subject which is literally instantaneous. Both involve duration. (ii) Anything which a person prehends at any moment must be present. If we combine these two propositions with the fact that presentness, in the strict sense in which it is on a level with a perfectly determinate degree of pastness or futurity, can belong only to what is instantaneous, difficulties at once arise. If anything which a person prehends at any moment must be present, it must be instantaneous. If it is instantaneous, it can neither persist without qualitative change nor suffer qualitative change. Yet prehended objects *are* prehended as persisting unchanged or as changing. Again, it seems evident from direct inspection that the objects which we prehend at any moment *are not* instantaneous event-particles, and that the notion of an event-particle is a rather elaborate and sophisticated product. The doctrine of the Specious Present seems to be a verbal trick for evading these difficulties. It is asserted that what is prehended at any moment must have "presentness", in some sense which *does not* entail instantaneousness and exclude duration, as presentness in the proper sense does. And the name "specious presentness" is coined to denote this assumed characteristic.

I propose to begin by substituting for the phrase "specious presentness" the word "presentedness". This is meant to denote a psychological characteristic, which is capable of various degrees from zero up to a maximum. Next, I propose to reject the proposition that anything which a person prehends at any moment must then be present. For it entails directly the false proposition that we prehend event-particles and nothing else. And it entails, at the next move, the false

proposition that we cannotprehend anything as changing or as remaining unchanged. I shall assume that what a person prehends at any moment is of finite duration, and therefore that only a single instantaneous cross-section of this total object can be present at that moment. I think that this is what the supporters of the Specious Present theory do in fact mean, though they do not say it very distinctly. We are now in a position to state the theory.

Consider any process of finite duration which a person *P* prehends at any moment, e.g., a whistling noise. Imagine this to be divided up into shorter and shorter adjoined successive phases, so that in the end it is regarded as a compact series of successive event-particles. Let us make the following assumptions: (i) That a certain one of these instantaneous cross-sections is present, in the strict sense. (ii) That this has the maximum degree of presentedness. (iii) That the degree of presentedness possessed by cross-sections which are earlier than this one tails off to zero at the cross-section which forms the boundary between what *P* is just ceasing to sense and just beginning to retrospect. I think that these three assumptions are implied in all accounts that have been given of the Specious Present. But I think that there is another point about which there is no consensus of opinion. Some people would assert that the cross-section which is strictly present and has maximal degree of presentedness is the later boundary of what is sensed at any moment by a person. Others seem to take a different view. They would hold that there are cross-sections later than this one, and that the degree of presentedness possessed by these tails off to zero at the boundary between what *P* is just beginning to sense and just ceasing to prospect. I think that this latter view is implied by writers like William James who say that the contents of the Specious Present are comparable to a saddle-back.

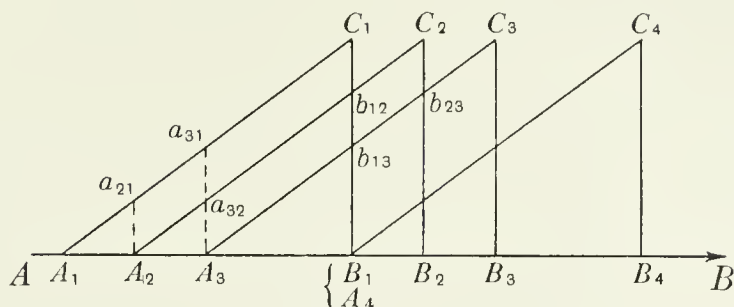
The "saddle-back" theory of course entails that *P* can at a given moment prehend phases which are still, strictly speaking, future. Both alternatives entail that *P* can at a given moment prehend phases which are then past. I think

that some people would feel more difficulty in admitting what is peculiar to the "saddle-back" theory than in admitting what is common to both theories. I know of no argument in favour of the "saddle-back" alternative, and so I will ignore it for the future. The alternative which we will consider may be called the "wedge" theory. The following analogy may be helpful. We might compare presentedness to greyness, and we might compare the contents of a single Specious Present to a finite strip of paper which is tinted from its left to its right edge with greyness which varies continuously in shade from pure black at the extreme left to pure white at the extreme right.

What we have so far considered is the extensive aspect of the Specious Present. We must now turn our attention to the transitory aspect, i.e., the succession of Specious Presents. I have seen no satisfactory account of this. Writers on the subject sometimes make statements which would imply that the contents of two successive Specious Presents are adjoined, i.e., that each Specious Present has an immediate successor, and that the later boundary of the earlier coincides with the earlier boundary of its immediate successor. This is quite impossible; for it would involve either repeated sudden jumps from maximal to minimal degree of presentedness (on the "wedge" theory), or a continuous rhythm of maxima and minima (on the "saddle-back" theory). So far as I can see, the only possible way in which to combine the statements made about each individual Specious Present with the continuity of the series of Specious Presents is the following.

For the sake of simplicity I will make the following preliminary assumptions. (i) That all Specious Presents of the same mind are of the same duration. (ii) That the maximum degree of presentedness is the same in all Specious Presents of the same mind. (iii) That the degree of presentedness tails off uniformly from the maximum to zero between the later and the earlier boundary of any Specious Present. None of these assumptions is likely to be exactly true, but this will not affect the general account of the succession of Specious Presents which I am going to give.

Consider the diagram given below:



In this diagram we take the directed line  $\vec{AB}$  to represent lapse of time. The direction left-to-right represents earlier-to-later. On our assumptions any Specious Present can be represented by a right-angled triangle, such as  $A_1B_1C_1$ , with its base  $A_1B_1$  on the line  $AB$ . Here the position of  $A_1$  on  $AB$  represents the date of the earlier boundary of this Specious Present, and the position of  $B_1$  represents the date of its later boundary. The length  $A_1B_1$  therefore represents the duration of the Specious Present. The perpendicular  $B_1C_1$  represents the maximum degree of presentedness. The perpendicular to  $A_1B_1$  from any point in  $AB$ , such as  $A_2$ , which is intermediate between  $A_1$  and  $B_1$ , will cut the line  $A_1C_1$  at a certain point which we will label  $a_{21}$ . The length  $A_2a_{21}$ , thus intercepted, will represent the degree of presentedness of an instantaneous cross-section of the content of the Specious Present  $A_1B_1C_1$  at the date represented by  $A_2$ .

Since there is continuity in our experience in respect of degree of presentedness, there can be no question of any Specious Present having an *immediate* successor, as, e.g., the integer 2 has for its immediate successor the integer 3. The series of successive Specious Presents must be *compact*, like the series of rational fractions; i.e., between any two Specious Presents, such as  $A_1B_1C_1$  and  $A_3B_3C_3$ , there will always be an intermediate one, such as  $A_2B_2C_2$ . Naturally this fact cannot be represented in the diagram. We must therefore remember that, between any two Specious Presents represented in the diagram, there will always be an infinite number of others not represented. Now the contents of any two



Specious Presents which are near enough to each other in time will partially, but *only* partially, overlap. This is shown in the diagram by the fact that any two of the three triangles,  $A_1B_1C_1$ ,  $A_2B_2C_2$ , and  $A_3B_3C_3$ , have an area in common.

Let us now consider some consequences of this. (i) The slice between  $A_1$  and  $A_2$  is prehended in the Specious Present  $A_1B_1C_1$  with a range of presentedness from zero to  $A_2a_{21}$ . It is not prehended at all in either  $A_2B_2C_2$  or  $A_3B_3C_3$ . It is *wholly past* with respect to them, and is at most *retrospected* in them. (ii) The slice between  $B_2$  and  $B_3$  is prehended in the Specious Present  $A_3B_3C_3$  with a range of presentedness from  $B_2b_{23}$  to the maximum. It is not prehended in either  $A_1B_1C_1$  or  $A_2B_2C_2$ . It is *wholly future* with respect to them, and is at most *prospected* in them. (iii) The slice between  $A_2$  and  $A_3$  is prehended in  $A_1B_1C_1$  with a range of presentedness from  $A_2a_{21}$  to  $A_3a_{31}$ . It is prehended in  $A_2B_2C_2$  with a range of presentedness from zero to  $A_3a_{32}$ . It is not prehended in  $A_3B_3C_3$ . It is *wholly past* with respect to this, and is at most *retrospected* in this. (iv) The slice between  $B_1$  and  $B_2$  is prehended in  $A_2B_2C_2$  with a range of presentedness from  $B_1b_{12}$  to the maximum. It is prehended in  $A_3B_3C_3$  with a range of presentedness from  $B_1b_{13}$  to  $B_2b_{23}$ . It is not prehended in  $A_1B_1C_1$ . It is *wholly future* with respect to this, and is at most *prospected* in this. Lastly (v) the slice between  $A_3$  and  $B_1$  is prehended in all three of the Specious Presents. In  $A_1B_1C_1$  it is prehended with a range of presentedness from  $A_3a_{31}$  to the maximum. In  $A_2B_2C_2$  it is prehended with a range of presentedness from  $A_3a_{32}$  to  $B_1b_{12}$ . And in  $A_3B_3C_3$  it is prehended with a range of presentedness from zero to  $B_1b_{13}$ .

Now consider an instantaneous cross-section at the date which is represented by the point  $B_1$ . This will be prehended in  $A_1B_1C_1$  with the maximum degree of presentedness. It will be prehended in every one of the compact series of Specious Presents between  $A_1B_1C_1$  and  $A_4B_4C_4$  (where  $A_4$  is the same moment as  $B_1$ ) with steadily decreasing degree of presentedness. Finally, it will just not be prehended in  $A_4B_4C_4$ , because its degree of presentedness will just have sunk to zero in it.

Passing to the other extreme from an *instantaneous* event-particle, we see that a phase whose duration is that of a single Specious Present, such as the slice between  $A_1$  and  $B_1$ , can just and only just be prehended as a temporal whole at a moment. It can be prehended as such a whole in one and only one Specious Present, viz.,  $A_1B_1C_1$ . Any phase of less duration, such as the slice between  $A_3$  and  $B_1$ , will be prehended as a temporal whole in every one of a compact series of successive Specious Presents. The first of them is  $A_1B_1C_1$ , and in this the *later* boundary of the phase has *maximum* degree of presentedness. The last of them is  $A_3B_3C_3$ , and in this the *earlier* boundary of the phase has *zero* degree of presentedness. The phase will be prehended as a temporal whole in these two Specious Presents, and in all those which come between them, but with steadily decreasing average degree of presentedness.

We can now sum up our account of the theory of the Specious Present as follows. For each human being there is a certain characteristic short period  $T$  which has the following properties: (i) Any phase which begins at any moment  $t_1$  and ends at any moment  $t_2$ , such that  $t_2 - t_1$  is less than  $T$ , can be prehended as a temporal whole throughout a period which begins at  $t_2$  and ends at  $t_3$ , where  $t_3 - t_1 = T$ . (ii) At any moment at which this phase is prehended as a temporal whole its degree of presentedness will tail off uniformly from a maximum at its later boundary to a minimum at its earlier boundary. (iii) During the period throughout which the phase continues to be prehended as a temporal whole its average degree of presentedness will steadily diminish, and at the end of the period the degree of presentedness of its earlier boundary will have sunk to zero.

There is one important consequence of this theory which I want to make quite explicit because many people would regard it as highly paradoxical. It is this. The period during which any phase, short enough to be prehended as a temporal whole, is so prehended *never* coincides with the period occupied by this phase. The two periods do not even overlap. Their relation is that of *adjunction*. For the period throughout

which this phase is prehended as a temporal whole *begins* at the moment when the period occupied by the phase *ends*. Thus the prehended phase is completely past at the moment when it first begins to be prehended, and it is getting more and more remotely past throughout the period during which it continues to be prehended as a temporal whole. The steadily diminishing average degree of presentedness with which the phase is prehended is the sign and the measure of its steady retreat into the more and more remote past.

I take it that our prehension of the contents of each Specious Present as having *presentedness* is the experiential basis of our notion of *presentness* in the strict sense. Presumably the tailing-off in degree of presentedness to zero from the latest to the earliest boundary of the content of each Specious Present is one factor in the experiential basis of our notion of temporal transition. A second factor is the continuous series of overlapping Specious Presents. And the third factor is the way in which a phase, short enough to be prehended as a temporal whole throughout a series of successive Specious Presents, steadily diminishes in degree of average presentedness, so that it first ceases to be prehended as a whole and eventually ceases to be prehended even in part. These three factors can be distinguished on reflection; but they are, of course, inseparably bound up with each other in actual experience.

## 2. McTaggart's Account of the Phenomenology of Time.

We are now in a position to discuss McTaggart's account of the phenomenology of Time in Chap. XXXIII of *The Nature of Existence*. He begins by talking of series of "temporal positions". He does not define or describe this rather ambiguous term; but in §306 he tells us that "the contents of any position in time form an event". We are also told that "the varied simultaneous contents of a single position are . . . a plurality of events". In most of the subsequent discussion he talks of series of *events*, and not of series of temporal positions. There is, in fact, a good deal of verbal looseness at the beginning of the chapter; but it is not worth while to

criticise it in detail, since we can state the essential parts of his doctrine quite clearly in our own way. This I will now do.

2.1. *B-Series and A-Series.* (i) *Prima facie* any two event-particles,  $X$  and  $Y$ , are either simultaneous or successive. Simultaneity is a symmetrical transitive relation. All the event-particles which are simultaneous with a given event-particle may be said to have "the same temporal position" as it and as each other. Succession is an asymmetrical transitive relation. If  $X$  and  $Y$  be two successive event-particles, then either  $X$  is earlier than  $Y$  or  $Y$  is earlier than  $X$ . We can thus classify event-particles into a series of successive sets of mutually simultaneous event-particles. Each such set may be called "the contents of a single temporal position". Of any two such sets one is earlier than the other. And, if  $S_1$  be earlier than  $S_2$ , and  $S_2$  be earlier than  $S_3$ , then  $S_1$  will be earlier than  $S_3$ . McTaggart gives the name of a "*B-series*" to any such series of successive sets of mutually simultaneous event-particles. Thus the generating relation of a *B-series* is the relation "earlier than".

(ii) Now *prima facie* we have also to consider another kind of temporal characteristic beside the relations of simultaneity and succession. This is the characteristic of pastness, presentness, and futurity. McTaggart uses the term "*A-series*" in connexion with these characteristics. I think that there is a certain ambiguity in the application of the term "*A-series*" which I will now remove.

(a) There is what I will call the "series of *A-characteristics*". This is simply the series formed by the various possible degrees of pastness in decreasing order of magnitude, the characteristic of strict presentness, and the various possible degrees of futurity in increasing order of magnitude. Except for the fact that it is compact it might be represented by the series of negative integers, the signless integer 0, and the series of positive integers. Thus

$$\dots -3, -2, -1; 0; 1, 2, 3\dots$$

*Pastness*
*Futurity*

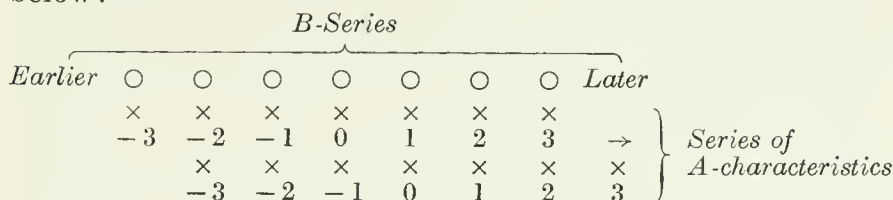


(b) At any moment any term in a *B*-series will be characterised by one and only one term in this series of *A*-characteristics. Conversely, at any moment any term in the series of *A*-characteristics will characterise one and only one term in any *B*-series. In virtue of this fact we can say, if we like, that the terms of a *B*-series constitute also at any moment an "*A*-series". They constitute a *B*-series in virtue of standing in the relation of earlier and later to each other. They constitute an *A*-series in virtue of their one-to-one correlation at every moment with the terms of the series of *A*-characteristics.

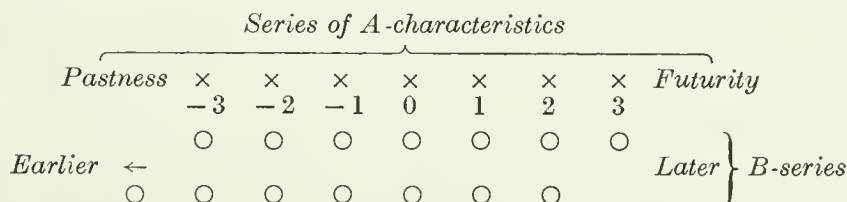
We will now consider this correlation in greater detail. The relation "earlier than" has magnitude, like the relation "left of". The Battle of Marathon precedes the Battle of the Somme much more than the Battle of Waterloo does. Now every difference in magnitude of the relation "earlier than" is correlated with a difference in the degree of the *A*-characteristics possessed by the related events. (For this purpose we must count futurity as similar to pastness but of opposite sign. And we must take "difference" to mean "algebraical difference".) Every *one* event-particle is continually changing in respect of its *A*-characteristics; it is continually getting less and less remotely future, then present, and then more and more remotely past. But any *two* event-particles in the same *B*-series always keep the *same algebraic difference* between their *A*-characteristics. They are *always* simultaneous or *always* successive. And, if they are successive, the earlier *always* precedes the later by the same amount. They might be compared to two sounds, each of which continually varies in absolute pitch, which nevertheless always keep the same relative pitch.

If an attempt is made to picture the temporal facts by means of an analogy with motion, there are two alternative ways open to us, as McTaggart points out in the footnote on p. 10 of Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*. (a) We can imagine the *B*-series standing still as a rigid whole, and the series of *A*-characteristics sliding along it as a rigid whole in the

direction of *earlier to later*. This is illustrated in the diagram below:



Or (b) we can imagine the series of *A*-characteristics standing still as a rigid whole, and the *B*-series sliding along it as a rigid whole in the direction from greater to less futurity, through presentness, to greater and greater pastness. See the diagram below:



2.2. *Time, Change, and the two Series.* At this point the following questions may be raised. How are the *A*-characteristics and the *B*-characteristics related to each other? And how are they related to the general notions of Time and Change? If the *A*-characteristics and the *B*-characteristics are logically independent of each other, it would be logically possible to reject either as delusive and to keep the other. If one depends on the other, but the dependence is not mutual, we might accept the more fundamental whilst we rejected the less fundamental as delusive. But, if we rejected the more fundamental as delusive, we should have to reject the less fundamental along with it. Again, are both kinds of characteristic essential factors in the notion of Time? If so, the rejection of either as delusive would involve the rejection of Time, even though the other should be retained. Suppose we could show that one of them is involved in the notion of Time and that the other is involved in this one. Then, if we could show that the latter is delusive, we should have to reject the former and with it we should have to reject Time as delusive.

McTaggart does not clearly distinguish these alternatives, and it is far from easy to make out exactly what he is maintaining on these points. I propose, first, to state what I believe to be his doctrine, and then to give chapter and verse for my interpretation.

2·21. *Statement of McTaggart's Doctrine.* Suppose that we are given a series of terms related by a transitive asymmetrical relation  $R$ . Suppose further that between any two terms,  $x$  and  $y$ , of this series there is a third term,  $z$ , which is dissimilar to  $x$  in some respect beside occupying a different position in the series from  $x$ , and which is dissimilar from  $y$  in some respect beside occupying a different position in the series from  $y$ . Then (i) the series *cannot* be counted as a process of perpetual qualitative change *unless*  $R$  is the relation "earlier than" and the series is therefore a  $B$ -series. (ii) If the relation  $R$  is that of "earlier than", and the series is therefore a  $B$ -series, the series *can* be counted as a process of perpetual qualitative change. (iii) The series cannot be counted as a process of perpetual qualitative change unless *each term* of it changes in respect of a certain characteristic. (iv) The only characteristics in respect of which the individual terms can change are  $A$ -characteristics, i.e., degree of futurity, presentness, and degree of pastness. (v) Therefore, unless the terms of a series have  $A$ -characteristics and can change in respect of these, the series cannot be a process of qualitative change. And therefore, by step (ii), its generating relation  $R$  cannot be that of "earlier than" and the series cannot be a  $B$ -series.

2·22. *Justification of this Account of McTaggart's Doctrine.* I believe this to be an accurate account of McTaggart's doctrine on the present subject. I will now give my reasons for thinking that my interpretation is correct.

(i) In §309 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart says that it would be universally admitted that "time involves change". "There could be no time", he says, "if nothing changed". This statement, by itself, is highly ambiguous. In the first place, he might be referring to qualitative change, as when a poker gets hotter or a noise becomes louder; or he might be referring to change with respect to temporal characteristics,

i.e., to an event becoming present and then retreating into the more and more remote past. Secondly, even if he were referring to qualitative change, he might or might not mean that there must *always* be qualitative change going on somewhere if temporal characteristics are to apply within the universe.

It is quite plain, however, from his subsequent discussion, and particularly from a remark which he makes in §362, pp. 42 to 43, that he is referring to *qualitative* change, and that he holds that qualitative change must be *perpetual*, if temporal characteristics are to have any application. He says there: "The time-series consists of terms, joined by the relation of earlier and later, which terms are different in their *non-temporal* qualities. (If they were not different in their non-temporal qualities, there would be no change and therefore no time.)" I have italicised the word "non-temporal", which is essential for my purpose.

It is not very easy to state accurately what McTaggart means by the loose phrase "are different in their non-temporal qualities". We have to remember that the series is compact, so that there are no "next" terms in it. And we have to allow for the possibility that terms which are exactly alike in all other respects but their position in the series might recur. I think that McTaggart's meaning is accurately expressed by the second supposition which I make at the beginning of Sub-section 2.21, viz., that, between any two terms,  $x$  and  $y$ , of the series, there is always a third term  $z$  which is qualitatively dissimilar to both of them.

(ii) In §316 McTaggart contrasts the case of the history of a poker, which is hot at one moment and cold at a later moment, with the case of the meridian through Greenwich, which cuts one parallel of latitude in England and another more northerly one in Scotland. He there admits and asserts that we should say that a qualitative change takes place if and only if there are qualitatively dissimilar terms related by the relation of "earlier than". So far he is in complete agreement with Russell's analysis of qualitative change, which he is there engaged in criticising. His objection to Russell's analysis is that, unless the terms had *A*-characteristics and changed in



respect of them, the relation between them could not be that of "earlier than", and the series of qualitatively dissimilar terms could not constitute a process of qualitative change. This seems to justify me in ascribing to McTaggart propositions (i), (ii), and (iii) of the synopsis in Sub-section 2.21.

(iii) That there can be no process of qualitative change unless individual events change in respect of certain characteristics is asserted in §311 and reiterated in the criticism of Russell's theory in §§315 and 317. It is true that, in the latter sections, McTaggart talks of "facts", and not of "events", as changing. But McTaggart was always liable to use the word "fact" loosely, and it is certain that he often used it to mean "event". Moreover, the "facts" which are said to change are facts about the *A*-characteristics of events. This seems to justify me in ascribing to McTaggart proposition (iii) of the synopsis.

(iv) That the only characteristics in respect of which an event can change are its *A*-characteristics is asserted in §311 and reiterated (with "facts" substituted for "events") in §§315 and 317. This seems to justify me in ascribing to McTaggart proposition (iv) of the synopsis.

Before leaving the question of what McTaggart believed on this subject and passing to the question of why he believed it, there is one more point to be noticed. In Chap. XXXIII of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart nowhere asserts, or claims to have proved, that the relation "earlier than" can be *defined* in terms of past, present, and future. But it is plain from §610 and the footnote to it that, when he had reached Chap. LI, he thought he had shown that "earlier than" can be *defined* in terms of *A*-characteristics, whilst the converse does not hold. He says in §610 that "the term *P* is earlier than the term *Q* if it is ever past while *Q* is present, or present while *Q* is future". And, in the footnote, he says that, in spite of certain qualifications, "the statement in the text remains an adequate *definition* of 'earlier than'". (I have italicised the word "definition" in this quotation.) This appears to me to be a much more radical doctrine than any that is stated or argued for in Chap. XXXIII.

2·23. *McTaggart's Reasons for his Doctrine.* We will now state and criticise McTaggart's reasons for holding the doctrine which, as I have tried to show, he does hold on this subject.

(i) I think that everyone would agree that such a series as we have described at the beginning of Sub-section 2·21 would be counted as a process of perpetual qualitative change if and only if the relation *R*, which generates it, were the relation "earlier than". It is not so clear that a series of terms might not be related by the relation "earlier than" without answering to the condition that between any two of them there is a third which is qualitatively dissimilar to both. It might, perhaps, be granted that *some* of the terms must be qualitatively dissimilar if the series is to be a *B*-series, and therefore that there would have to be qualitative change at *some* moments. But is it at all obvious that complete qualitative *similarity* of all the terms between a certain pair, *x* and *y*, would be incompatible with their being ordered by the relation of "earlier than"? In fact, granted that there could not be succession without *occasional* qualitative change, is it obvious that there could not be succession without *perpetual* qualitative change? This is certainly not evident to me; but I do not think that the doubt affects the rest of McTaggart's argument.

(ii) The essential point which McTaggart has to prove is that a series of qualitatively dissimilar terms could not be counted as a process of qualitative change unless *each term* changed in respect of certain characteristics. If this is established anywhere, it is established in §§310 to 312 inclusive. The argument may be summarised as follows. Suppose, if possible, that there could be a *B*-series of terms which had no *A*-characteristics, and therefore of terms which could not change in respect of *A*-characteristics. Then this series could not constitute a process of qualitative change. But, unless there be qualitative change, no temporal characteristics have any application. Now the relation "earlier than", which relates the terms of a *B*-series, is a temporal relation. Therefore the supposition that there could be a *B*-series of terms

which had no *A*-characteristics must be rejected as impossible.

McTaggart professes to show that a *B*-series of terms which had no *A*-characteristics could not constitute a process of qualitative change in §§310 and 311. His argument is as follows: (a) A process of qualitative change could not consist in the annihilation of one event in such a series and the generation of another event in place of it. For any term that is *ever* earlier than another *always* precedes that other, and always precedes it by exactly the same amount. (b) A process of qualitative change cannot consist in one event "merging into" another, so that the two have a slice in common. For then the change would involve the annihilation of that phase of the first event which precedes the common slice and the subsequent generation of that phase of the second event which follows the common slice. And such generation and annihilation of terms in a *B*-series is impossible for the reasons already given. (c) Having rejected these two alternative analyses of qualitative change in §310, McTaggart assumes in §311 that the only alternative left is that each term in a *B*-series changes in respect of certain characteristics. Since the terms are events, the only characteristics in respect of which they can change are temporal ones. They can only become less and less remotely future, then present, and then more and more remotely past. That is, they must have *A*-characteristics, and they must change in respect of these.

Plainly there are two questions to be raised about this argument. (i) Are the alternative analyses of qualitative change which McTaggart here proposes exhaustive? (ii) Is he justified in rejecting the first two of the three alternatives which he considers?

(i) It will be noticed that, in all the alternatives which McTaggart here considers, he confines his attention to *events* and says nothing about *things*. The alternatives which he considers are (a) that *events* are generated and annihilated *en bloc*, (b) that *events* are continually "losing their tails and growing new heads", and (c) that *events* change in respect of

*A*-characteristics. Now *prima facie* it is *things*, and not events, which are the subjects of qualitative change. Oddly enough, McTaggart never mentions this apparent alternative until he begins to criticise Russell's analysis of qualitative change in §§314 to 316 inclusive. It will be well to consider what he says about this at once.

Perhaps the most plausible way of stating Russell's theory is the following. Events are neither generated nor annihilated, nor do they change in respect of any of their characteristics. There are certain series of successive events, such that the members of any one such series are intimately interconnected by certain spatial, causal, and other relations, which do not interconnect members of any two such series. Each such series is counted as the history of a different thing. Now successive members of one such series may differ in respect of a certain quality; e.g., one term may have the determinable quality *Q* in the determinate form  $q_1$  and a later term may have *Q* in the form  $q_2$ . The statement "The thing *T* changes from  $q_1$  to  $q_2$ " is completely analysable into a statement of the following kind. "There is a certain series of successive events so interrelated that it counts as the history of a certain thing *T*;  $e_1$  and  $e_2$  are two successive adjoined phases in this series; and  $e_1$  has *Q* in the form  $q_1$  whilst  $e_2$  has *Q* in the form  $q_2$ ." Now what objection has McTaggart to this alternative, which he failed to consider in §§310 and 311? He has two objections. The first is, I think, irrelevant; and the second is, I think, an *ignoratio elenchi*. We will now consider them in turn.

(a) In §315 his objection amounts to the following. It is *always* a fact about this series that it contains a term which has  $q_1$  and a term which has  $q_2$  and that the former immediately precedes the latter. Hence this fact cannot be what is referred to when we say that *T* has changed in respect of *Q* from  $q_1$  to  $q_2$ .

Now this seems to me to be irrelevant. Certainly, on this view of qualitative change, no fact and no event changes. It is alleged, instead, by the supporters of this view, that the fact of change consists in a conjunction of facts which



neither change nor are about change. To this McTaggart merely makes the counter-assertion that there can be no change unless certain facts about events change, i.e., unless events of the first-order are subjects of events of the second-order. And the only ground which he has given for this is the argument in §§310 and 311, where he *ignored* the present alternative and *assumed* that he had exhausted all the possible alternative views about qualitative change.

(b) In §316 he takes a different line. He there admits that such a series *would* constitute a process of qualitative change, provided that the terms in it *could* be related by the relation "earlier than". But he claims to have shown that, unless the terms had *A*-characteristics and changed in respect of these, they could not be related by this relation, and therefore the series could not be a process of qualitative change.

But how has he shown this? He has done so, if at all, only by using an argument which *ignores* the present alternative and *assumes* that the three alternatives enumerated in §§310 and 311 are exhaustive. Thus he rejects the present alternative only by appealing to an argument which tacitly assumes that it has already been rejected.

(ii) We can now pass to the second question. Was McTaggart justified in rejecting the alternatives which he mentioned in §310? The basis of his rejection is the principle that, if *X* ever precedes *Y* by a certain amount, then it *always* precedes *Y* by precisely that amount. This principle is supposed to be incompatible with the view that events are generated and annihilated. Now I think that this principle, though it is obviously true in some sense or other, needs to be rather carefully considered.

Let us take as examples the Battle of Hastings and the Battle of Waterloo. Before either battle had happened it would have been true to say "There will be a battle at Hastings and there will be a battle at Waterloo 749 years later", though perhaps no one would have been in a position to say it. During the Battle of Hastings it would have been true to say "There is a battle going on at Hastings and there will be a battle at Waterloo 749 years later." At any inter-

mediate date it would have been true to say "There was a battle at Hastings and there will be a battle at Waterloo 749 years later." During the Battle of Waterloo it would have been true to say "There is a battle going on at Waterloo and there was a battle at Hastings 749 years earlier." At any moment after the Battle of Waterloo it is true to say "There was a battle at Hastings and there was a battle at Waterloo 749 years later." These expressions, all of which involve *temporal copulas*, are the natural and the accurate ways of recording facts about relations of precedence. When both events are known or confidently believed to have happened it is usual and convenient to employ such a phrase as "The Battle of Hastings preceded the Battle of Waterloo by 749 years." When it is confidently expected that both events will happen it is usual and convenient to employ such a phrase as "The degree-ceremony *will be* followed after an interval of half-an-hour by a luncheon in Trinity."

It will be noticed that, in every case, either a temporal copula or a verb with tense is used. No one but a philosopher doing philosophy would say "The Battle of Hastings precedes the Battle of Waterloo by 749 years." Such phraseology would suggest that the two events are two particulars which (a) somehow *co-exist* either timelessly or simultaneously, and yet (b) stand timelessly or sempiternally in a certain *temporal* relation of precedence. This must be nonsense, and it is most undesirable to use phrases which inevitably suggest such nonsense. I cannot help suspecting that there is some muddle of this kind at the back of McTaggart's mind when he says that events cannot be annihilated or generated because this would be incompatible with the fact that they *always* stand in the determinate temporal relation in which they do stand to each other. I suspect that his thought, if made explicit, would run somewhat as follows. "In order to stand in any relation to each other at any moment two related terms must, in some sense, *co-exist*. Therefore, if a certain pair of terms *always* stand in a certain relation to each other, they must *always* co-exist in that sense, whatever it may be. But, if two terms always co-exist, *each* term must, in some sense, *always exist*."

And, if each term always exists, neither term can ever be generated or annihilated."

Now I think that this argument owes any plausibility that it may have to the following confusion. One begins by thinking of relations between timeless terms, like numbers, or of spatial relations between bodies. Numbers "co-exist" timelessly, and spatial relations hold between bodies only while the bodies co-exist. If the fountain in the Great Court of Trinity were "annihilated", in the perfectly intelligible sense in which it would be if it were blown up by a bomb, it would no longer be between the Great Gate and the Hall. If a statue of Henry VIII were "generated" in its place, in the perfectly intelligible sense in which it would be if the College had one constructed there, it would begin to be between the Great Gate and the Hall. I suspect that one tends to carry over these notions and principles from timeless terms and continuants, where they are intelligible and true, to the perfectly unique case of events, where they are meaningless. The only sense in which an event  $e$  is "annihilated" is that there was and no longer is an event answering to the description of  $e$ . The only sense in which an event  $e$  is "generated" is that there was not and now is an event answering to the description of  $e$ . In this sense events *are* "generated" and "annihilated", and this is compatible with any two of them "always" standing to each other in any temporal relation in which they "ever" stand.

To sum up. It seems to me that McTaggart's arguments to prove that a  $B$ -series of terms which had no  $A$ -characteristics would not constitute a process of qualitative change, and therefore would not be a  $B$ -series, are thoroughly confused and inconclusive. It does not follow that his conclusion is false, or that it could not be proved in some other way. We will therefore re-consider the question independently.

2.24. *Restatement of the Position.* I cannot help suspecting, from the passages which I quoted from §610 and the footnote to it, that McTaggart's mind probably moved in the following way in thinking of the connexion between  $A$ -characteristics and  $B$ -characteristics. I suspect that he thought that the

*B*-relation could be *defined* in terms of the *A*-characteristics, and that the latter could not be defined in terms of the former; and he then constructed the very unsatisfactory arguments about qualitative change to persuade other people that the *B*-relation could not hold except between terms which had changing *A*-characteristics.

I think that the view which underlies §610 and its footnote might be put most clearly and fairly as follows. There is a set of terms such that at any moment every *A*-characteristic belongs to one or other of them, each of them has one and only one *A*-characteristic, and no two of them have the same *A*-characteristic. Each of these terms changes perpetually in respect of its *A*-characteristic in the direction from greater to less futurity, through presentness, to greater and greater pastness. These changes are so adjusted that the *algebraical difference* between the *A*-characteristics of any two terms remains constant and independent of the *absolute values* of their *A*-characteristics. To say that *X* is "so much earlier than" *Y* at any moment *means* simply and solely that the algebraic difference between the *A*-characteristics of *X* and of *Y* is so-and-so at that moment. Since this algebraic difference is constant, *X* will be exactly as much earlier than *Y* at every moment as it is at any moment. Since the absolute values of the *A*-characteristics of *X* and *Y* are constantly changing, *X* and *Y* will be constantly retreating in the direction of greater and greater pastness. Thus every term in the series runs through the *A*-series of characteristics at the same rate and in the same direction, and so each term changes in respect of its *A*-characteristics. Yet every different term in the series at any moment has a different *A*-characteristic, and the algebraic difference between the *A*-characteristics of any given pair of terms remains constant at all moments. Thus the terms form a *B*-series, and their *B*-relations are the same at every moment. We can accept Russell's analysis of qualitative change, so far as it goes; and McTaggart seems to do this in the second paragraph of §316 and in the passage from §362 (pp. 42-43) which I quoted earlier. But we must add to it that each of the events in the series



must be changing in respect of its *A*-characteristics in order that the series may be a *B*-series and count as a process of qualitative change.

The theory which I have just stated seems to be much the best case that can be put up for McTaggart. What are we to say about it? (i) I have tried to show in Sub-section 1.22 of the present chapter that it is hopeless to treat temporal becoming as a particular case of qualitative change; and this, in effect, is what the present theory tries to do. We must remember, however, that McTaggart is going to reject ostensible temporality as a delusive characteristic. Therefore he might welcome the difficulties which I indicated in that Sub-section. He might say: "I agree that, if you try to treat temporal becoming as a species of qualitative change, you are landed in all the absurdities which you have mentioned. On the other hand, if you want to think of it at all, this is the only way in which to think of it. So we must conclude that ostensible temporality will not bear thinking about, and that it is a delusive characteristic."

(ii) It might be objected against this theory that a person can directlyprehend two terms, e.g., two ticks of a clock, which fall into the same Specious Present, as *successive*. Yet he prehends both of them as *present*. Therefore, when he says that one is earlier than the other, he cannot *mean* that the former is *past* when the latter is present. I think that this objection depends on the confusion between presentness and presentedness, which is embalmed in the phrase "specious present" and has been indicated in Sub-section 1.3 of this chapter. The two ticks of the clock in my example are *co-presented*; i.e., when the latter is being prehended the earlier is still being prehended though with diminished degree of presentedness. But a moment's reflexion on the fact that they are prehended as *successive* shows that they cannot be *co-present*.

(iii) Even if we reject the view that "*X* is earlier than *Y*" means that there is a difference in the *A*-characteristics of *X* and of *Y* and that this difference is positive, there remains another alternative which would suffice for McTaggart's

purpose. It might be suggested that the relation "earlier than" can hold only between terms which have *A*-characteristics; just as harmonic relations can hold only between terms which have pitch. And it might be suggested that the degree of the *B*-relation between two terms depends on the difference between the determinate values of their *A*-characteristics; just as the harmonic relations between two notes depend on the difference between the absolute pitches of the two. In fact, to use an expression of Meinong's, we might be able to see that *B*-relations are "founded upon" differences in the *A*-characteristics of the related terms.

This view seems to me to be a highly plausible one, and I know of no positive argument against it. If it were accepted, we should have to grant to McTaggart that there could not be *B*-relations between terms unless the terms had *A*-characteristics, even if we refused to admit that *B*-relations are definable in terms of *A*-characteristics and their differences. I should consider that this theory holds the field unless it can be shown that sentences which contain the words "past", "present", or "future", or their equivalents, can be translated without loss of meaning into sentences which do not contain these words or equivalents of them, but do contain the phrase "earlier than" or some equivalent of it. Now Russell and certain other philosophers have claimed that this can be done. McTaggart discusses Russell's attempt in §§313 to 318 inclusive.

A simple way of stating the theory is as follows. Take the sentence "It is now raining." A number of utterances may occur at different times, which are all alike enough in the relevant respects to count as utterances of this sentence. Now any one who utters this sentence seriously on any occasion means to express his belief that an occurrence of rain falling in his neighbourhood is simultaneous with this utterance of his. And anyone who hears and understands any such utterance will take it to mean that an occurrence of rain falling in the speaker's neighbourhood is simultaneous with this utterance. Thus any utterance *U* of the type-sentence (to use Ramsey's phrase) "It is raining now" means "An occurrence

of rain in the neighbourhood of the speaker who utters  $U$  is simultaneous with this utterance." We may abbreviate this into "An occurrence of rain is spatio-temporally contiguous with the utterance  $U$ ." Now both speaker and hearer actually *prehend* the utterance  $U$ , since one makes it and both hear it. So, finally, when a speaker utters the type-sentence "It is raining now", what he means is "An occurrence of rain is spatio-temporally contiguous with *this* utterance of *mine*." And what the hearer understands could be expressed by the hearer saying "An occurrence of rain is spatio-temporally contiguous with *that* utterance of *his*." Different utterances of the same type-sentence necessarily have different meanings. One will mean "An occurrence of rain is spatio-temporally contiguous with  $U_1$ ." Another will mean "An occurrence of rain is spatio-temporally contiguous with  $U_2$ ." If  $U_1$  and  $U_2$  be successive, it may well be that one expresses a true proposition and the other a false proposition, though both are utterances of the same type-sentence "It is raining now."

The theory may be summed up as follows. Any utterance of a type-sentence, which is of a certain grammatical form and contains the type-word "now" or "present" or some equivalent, is understood by speaker and hearers to mean that an event of a certain kind is *simultaneous* with *this* utterance. Any utterance of a type-sentence, which is of a certain grammatical form and contains the type-word "past" or some equivalent, is understood by speaker and hearers to mean that an event of a certain kind is *earlier than this* utterance. And the same holds, *mutatis mutandis*, for any utterance of a type-sentence which is of a certain grammatical form and contains the type-word "future" or some equivalent. Unless there were people who uttered type-sentences of these kinds nothing would be past, present, or future; though events would still be simultaneous or successive. If this be so, *A*-characteristics have been completely analysed in terms of *B*-relations.

Can this theory be accepted? (i) In the form in which I have stated it I do not think that it can possibly be the right analysis of what a *speaker* means when he utters such a type-

sentence as "It is raining now", even if it were the right analysis of what his *hearers* understand on such an occasion. For this would involve that the speaker is using the utterance to express a judgment which he is making about the utterance itself. I am very doubtful whether this is possible at all; and I am fairly certain that, when I make such an utterance, I am not making a judgment about the utterance which I am making. This difficulty does not arise about the hearers.

(ii) The objection just mentioned could be removed by a slight modification of the theory. We might say that what the speaker means by his utterance is that an occurrence of rain is simultaneous with *this*, where *this* is some particular, other than the utterance itself, which he prehends simultaneously with making the utterance. The particular in question might be one of his own experiences or some *sensum* which he is sensing. His hearers will almost certainly not apprehend this particular, and therefore what they understand by the utterance cannot be exactly the same as what the speaker means to express by it. As regards the hearers, we may suppose that each interprets the utterance to mean that an occurrence of rain in the speaker's neighbourhood is roughly simultaneous with certain auditory *sensa* which that hearer is sensing, viz., those which are manifestations to *him* of this utterance of the speaker. Let us take the theory in this amended form, and consider whether it is adequate.

(iii) The first comment to be made is this. The theory professes to give an analysis of those temporal facts which are expressed by sentences containing temporal copulas, like "is now", "was", or "will be", or temporal adjectives, like "past", "present", or "future". When we look at the proposed analysis we find that it substitutes sentences of the form "Such and such an event is simultaneous with, or is earlier than, or is later than, *this*"; where "this" is used as a logical proper name for some particular which the speaker or the hearer is prehending when he makes or hears the utterance. Now what kind of copula is the "is" in these substituted sentences? Is it a timeless copula, like the "is" in



"3 is the immediate successor of 2" or in "13 is a prime number"? Or is it the temporal copula "is now"? Or is it some third kind of copula which logicians and metaphysicians have not clearly recognised and distinguished?

If it is the timeless copula, the theory has *prima facie* been successful. If it is the temporal copula "is now", the theory has certainly failed. If it is supposed to be some third kind of copula, we must await further information about it from supporters of the theory.

Now, as I pointed out in Sub-section 2.23 of this chapter, we do not say "The Battle of Hastings precedes (or *is* followed by) the Battle of Waterloo." We say "The Battle of Hastings preceded (or *was* followed by) the Battle of Waterloo." Again, we do not say, on getting up in the morning, "My lunch precedes (or *is* followed by) a meeting of the Faculty Board of Moral Science." We say "My lunch *will* precede (or *will* be followed by) a meeting of the Faculty Board of Moral Science." Thus it seems *prima facie* that the copula in propositions which assert temporal relations between events is not the timeless copula which occurs in propositions about the qualities and relations of abstract objects like numbers. The copula seems *prima facie* to be the temporal copula "is now", "was", or "will be", as the case may be. According to the theory which we are discussing, an utterance of the type-sentence "It will rain" means "An occurrence of rain in this neighbourhood is later than *this*", where "*this*" is used by the speaker as a proper name for a certain particular which he prehends when he makes the utterance. But no one except a philosopher doing philosophy ever does talk in this way. What we say is "An occurrence of rain in this neighbourhood *will* follow (or *will* happen later than) *this*." So *prima facie* the proposed analysis has failed to analyse away the temporal copula "will". Similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the proposed analysis of statements of the form "My breakfast is past" or "I have had my breakfast." We are told that an utterance of such a type-sentence means "Eating my breakfast precedes *this*." But no one ever does talk in this way in real life. Instead we say "Eating my

breakfast preceded this." And so, *prima facie*, the temporal copula has not been analysed away.

Of course it may be answered that this objection depends simply on defects in the language that we speak. It may be so. But I am more inclined to think that the obvious artificiality and awkwardness of the sentences which express temporal facts, according to this analysis of them, are a sign that we are trying and failing to force temporal facts into the mould of non-temporal facts about abstract objects such as numbers. The theory seems to presuppose that all events, past, present, and future, in some sense "co-exist", and stand to each other timelessly or sempiternally in determinate relations of temporal precedence. But how are we to think of this "co-existence" of events? It seems to me that the events and their temporal relations are thought of either by analogy with *timeless* abstract objects, such as the integers in their order of magnitude, or by analogy with *simultaneous persistent* particulars, like points on a line in spatial order from left to right. Neither of these analogies will bear thinking out; yet I suspect that the theory is made to seem intelligible and adequate to its supporters by the fact that these irrelevant analogies are always hovering about at the back of their minds.

(iv) It remains to make one more comment on the theory under discussion. It seems to me that the theory leaves altogether out of account the transitory aspect of Time. According to it, "past", "present", and "future", as used by a person at any moment, always denominate relational properties, in which the relation is "earlier than", "simultaneous with", or "later than", respectively, and the relatum is some particular which the speaker is prehending or some experience which he is having at that moment. Supposing this to be true, the transitory aspect of Time consists in the fact that the relatum is never the same on two different occasions on which these words are used.

Consider, e.g., that series of successive experiences which constitutes my mental history from the cradle to the grave. On the theory which we are discussing, there is no question

of events "becoming" or "passing away". In some sense of "is", there "is" timelessly or sempiternally all that there ever has been or will be of the series. The qualitative changes that take place in the course of my experience are supposed to be completely analysable into the fact that different terms of this series differ in quality, as different segments of a variously coloured string differ in colour. But this leaves out the fact that at any moment a certain short segment of the series is marked out from all the rest by the quality of presentedness; that at any two different moments the short segments thus marked out are different segments, though they may partially overlap if the two moments are near enough together; and that the relatum at any moment is, or is contained in, that short segment which has presentedness at that moment. Thus change has to be postulated in a sense not contemplated by the theory, viz., the steady movement of the quality of presentedness along the series in the direction from earlier to later. If we try to deal with this kind of change in the way in which the theory deals with the qualitative changes that take place in the course of my experience, we shall be committed to making each term in the original series a term in a second series in a second time-dimension. We shall have events of the second order, viz., the becoming presented of events of the first order. In fact we shall be landed in the endless series of time-dimensions and orders of events which I mentioned in Sub-section 1.22 of this chapter. And this seems to me to be a most serious difficulty.

As at present advised, then, I am inclined to agree with McTaggart that *A*-characteristics cannot be analysed completely in terms of *B*-relations, and that the notions of Time and Qualitative Change involve *A*-characteristics as well as *B*-characteristics. I am well aware how easy it is to talk nonsense about Time, and to mistake for arguments what are in fact merely verbal tangles. I think it is quite possible that I may have done this. I have altered my mind too often on this most perplexing subject to feel any confidence that my present opinions are either correct or well-founded. But I give them for what they are worth.

### 3. McTaggart's Arguments against the Reality of Time.

We come at last to McTaggart's destructive arguments. There are two of these. There is a subsidiary argument contained in §§ 326 to 328 of *The Nature of Existence*, which I do not think that McTaggart regards as conclusive. The main argument is contained in §§ 329 to 333 inclusive. We will begin with it.

3.1. *The Main Argument.* We take as an established premise that any series which could count as a temporal series would have to consist of terms which have *A*-characteristics and which individually change in respect of their *A*-characteristics. McTaggart tries to prove that there is a contradiction involved in this condition, and therefore that nothing could be a temporal series. If he is right, then, the characteristic of being a *B*-series, i.e., a series in which the terms are events and the relation is that of "earlier than", is a delusive characteristic.

The essence of the argument is as follows: (i) The various determinate *A*-characteristics are incompatible with each other, in the usual way in which different determinates under the same determinable are so. McTaggart confines his statement to past, present, and future. But, of course, if it is true at all, it is equally true of any two degrees of pastness or of futurity.

(ii) Every event has all the *A*-characteristics; for every event has all degrees of futurity, has presentness, and has all degrees of pastness. The only possible exceptions would be the last event, if there were one, and the first event, if there were one. But, even so, the last event would have presentness and all degrees of futurity, though it would not have pastness. And the first event would have presentness and all degrees of pastness, though it would not have futurity. Thus every event has a plurality of determinate *A*-characteristics, whilst no two *A*-characteristics are compatible with each other.

(iii) McTaggart admits that, at first sight, this seems to lead to no difficulty. After all, no event has two different



*A*-characteristics at any *one* moment; though each event has a different *A*-characteristic at each different moment.

(iv) McTaggart claims to show, however, that this attempted answer is useless, because it leads either to a contradiction or to a vicious infinite regress. His argument is as follows.

Suppose we try to avoid the contradiction of a term *M* being past, present, and future by saying that *M is now* present, *will be* past, and *has been* future; or by saying that *M is now* future, *will be* present, and *will be* past; or by saying that *M is now* past, *has been* present, and *has been* future. We must then raise the question of what we mean by these temporal copulas. According to McTaggart, there is only one possible analysis. To say that *S has been P* means "There is a moment *t*, such that *S* has *P* at *t* and *t* is past." To say that *S is now P* means "There is a moment *t*, such that *S* has *P* and *t* is present." To say that *S will be P* means "There is a moment *t*, such that *S* has *P* at *t* and *t* is future."

Now substitute *M* for *S*, and substitute the *A*-characteristics for *P*. We get the following results. "*M is now* present" means "There is a moment *t*, such that *M* has presentness at *t* and *t* is present." Again, "*M will be* past" means "There is a moment *t*, such that *M* has pastness at *t* and *t* is future." Lastly, "*M has been* future" means "There is a moment *t*, such that *M* has futurity at *t* and *t* is past."

The next stage of the argument will be found in the last paragraph of §331. It is very difficult to follow, as stated by McTaggart; but I have no doubt as to what is the essential point of it. I shall first quote McTaggart's argument in his own words, and shall then restate in my own way what is substantially the same argument. McTaggart's statement runs as follows: "...every moment, like every event, is both past, present, and future....If *M* is present, there is no moment of past time at which it is past. But the moments of future time, in which it is past, are equally moments of past time, in which it cannot be past. Again, that *M* is future and will be present and past means that *M* is future at a moment of present time, and present and past at different moments of

future time. In that case it cannot be present or past at any moments of past time. But all the moments of future time, in which *M* will be present or past, are equally moments of past time."

I will now try to put the essential points of this very obscure argument clearly. The question is whether the three propositions "*M* is now present, *M* has been future, and *M* will be past" are mutually compatible. McTaggart wants to show that they are not. (a) Consider the proposition "*M* will be past." According to McTaggart, this means "There is a moment *t*, such that *M* has pastness at *t* and *t* is future." But, according to him, any moment that is future is also *present*. Therefore it follows that there is a moment *t*, such that *M* has pastness at *t* and *t* is *present*. But this is equivalent to the proposition "*M* is now past." This is incompatible with the proposition "*M* is now present." Thus "*M* will be past" entails "*M* is now past", and the latter is inconsistent with "*M* is now present." Therefore "*M* will be past" is inconsistent with "*M* is now present."

(b) Now consider the proposition "*M* has been future." According to McTaggart, this means "There is a moment *t*, such that *M* has futurity at *t* and *t* is past." But, according to him, any moment that is past is also *present*. Therefore it follows that there is a moment *t*, such that *M* has futurity at *t* and *t* is *present*. But this is equivalent to the proposition "*M* is now future." This is incompatible with the proposition "*M* is now present." Thus "*M* has been future" entails "*M* is now future", and the latter is inconsistent with "*M* is now present." Therefore "*M* has been future" is inconsistent with "*M* is now present."

(c) If the argument in paragraphs (a) and (b) were valid, it would have proved that both the propositions "*M* will be past" and "*M* has been future" are inconsistent with the proposition "*M* is now present." It remains to show that these two propositions are inconsistent with *each other*. This is easily done. From the argument in paragraph (a) we conclude that "*M* will be past" entails "*M* is now past." From the argument in paragraph (b) we conclude that "*M* has been

future" entails "*M* is now future." But the two propositions "*M* is now past" and "*M* is now future" are incompatible with each other. Therefore the two propositions "*M* will be past" and "*M* has been future" are incompatible with each other. Thus, if the argument is valid, it would prove that *each* of the three propositions "*M* is now present", "*M* has been future", and "*M* will be past" is incompatible with the other two. I believe this to be a fair and clear statement of the line of argument which McTaggart had in mind in the last paragraph of §331.

If we had started, instead, with the three propositions "*M* is now past, *M* has been present, and *M* has been future", or "*M* is now future, *M* will be present, and *M* will later on be past", a similar argument would have led to a similar result. So McTaggart claims to have shown that the original contradiction of *M* being past, present, and future breaks out again in the amended statement that *M* is now present, has been future, and will be past; and in the amended statement that *M* is now past and has been present and future; and in the amended statement that *M* is now future and will be present and past.

(v) Of course there is *prima facie* a perfectly simple answer to this alleged contradiction, which McTaggart mentions in §332. Instead of admitting in paragraph (a) above that the future moment at which *M* has pastness is also present, we ought only to have admitted that it *will be* present. And, instead of admitting in paragraph (b) above that the past moment at which *M* has futurity is also present, we ought only to have admitted that it *has been* present. The argument would then have broken down at the first move.

McTaggart rejects this answer on the following grounds. According to him, we shall have to analyse the statement that a certain *moment t* is now present, has been future, and will be past, in a similar way to that in which we analysed the corresponding statements about the *event M*. To say that *t* will be present, e.g., must mean that there is a moment *t'*, such that *t* has presentness at *t'* and *t'* is future. To say that *t* has been present must mean that there is a moment *t'*, such that *t* has

presentness at  $t'$  and  $t'$  is past. Thus the same contradiction will arise at the second stage about *moments* as arose at the first stage about *events*. Any attempt to remove it in the same way will merely lead to a third stage at which the same contradiction will break out. We start on an infinite regress; which is vicious, because each step is needed in order to remove a contradiction in the previous stage, and at each stage the same contradiction breaks out again.

This is the main argument by which McTaggart persuaded himself that nothing can have *A*-characteristics. If nothing can have them, nothing can change in respect of them. If nothing can change in respect of *A*-characteristics, there can be no processes of qualitative change. And, if there can be no processes of qualitative change, no series can be a *B*-series. And so neither *A*-characteristics, nor *B*-relations, nor qualitative change or persistence, can apply to anything. All these ostensible characteristics are delusive.

3.11. *Criticism of the Main Argument.* We must now consider whether this argument of McTaggart's is valid. I should suppose that every reader must have felt about it as any healthy-minded person feels about the Ontological Argument for the existence of God, viz., that it is obviously wrong somewhere, but that it may not be easy to say precisely what is wrong with it.

(i) I cannot myself see that there is any contradiction to be avoided. When it is said that pastness, presentness, and futurity are incompatible predicates, this is true only in the sense that no one term could have two of them *simultaneously* or *timelessly*. Now no term ever appears to have any of them timelessly, and no term ever appears to have any two of them simultaneously. What appears to be the case is that certain terms have them *successively*. Thus there is nothing in the temporal appearances to suggest that there is a contradiction to be avoided.

(ii) What are we to say, then, about McTaggart's alleged vicious infinite regress? In the first place we must say that, since there is no contradiction to be avoided, there is no need to start on any regress in order to avoid a contradiction.



Secondly, we may well ask why McTaggart should assume that, e.g., " $M$  is now present" *must* be analysed into "There is a moment  $t$ , such that  $M$  has presentness at  $t$  and  $t$  is present." Similarly, we may ask why he should assume that, e.g., "The moment  $t$  has been future" *must* be analysed into "There is a moment  $t'$ , such that  $t$  has futurity at  $t'$  and  $t'$  is past."

(a) In the first place, we note that McTaggart has suddenly introduced the notion of *moments*, in addition to that of *events*. No justification whatever has been given for this. It would seem to imply that the temporal copulas "is now", "has been", and "will be" presuppose some form of the Absolute Theory of Time. This is surely not obvious.

(b) The real motive of this analysis, and the real cause of the subsequent infinite regress, seems to me to be a certain assumption which McTaggart tacitly makes. He assumes that what is meant by a sentence with a *temporal copula* must be completely (and more accurately) expressible by a sentence or combination of sentences in which there is no temporal copula, but only *temporal predicates* and non-temporal copulas. And the regress arises because there remains at every stage a copula which, if taken as non-temporal, involves the *non-temporal* possession by a term of certain temporal predicates which could belong to it only *successively*.

Take, e.g., the general analysis of " $S$  is now  $P$ " into "There is a moment  $t$ , such that  $S$  has  $P$  at  $t$  and  $t$  is present." The only motive for making this analysis is that it seems at first sight to have got rid of the temporal copula "is now". The predicate "having  $P$  at  $t$ " may be said to belong to  $S$  timelessly or sempiternally if it belongs to  $S$  at all. And we are tempted to think that the "is" in " $t$  is present" is a timeless copula too. Now the source of McTaggart's regress is that, if you take the "is" in " $t$  is present" to be timeless, you will have to admit that  $t$  is also past and future in the same timeless sense of "is". Now this is impossible, for it is obvious that  $t$  can have these predicates only in succession. If, to avoid this, you say that the "is" in " $t$  is present" means "is now", you have not got rid of temporal copulas. Therefore, if

you are committed at all costs to getting rid of them, you will not be able to rest at this stage. At every stage of the analysis you will have a copula which, if taken to be *non-temporal*, leads to a contradiction, and, if taken to be *temporal*, needs to be analysed further in terms of temporal predicates and non-temporal copulas.

Now it seems to me that the proper interpretation of the regress is that it disproves the assumption that temporal copulas can be replaced by temporal predicates and non-temporal copulas. Since there is nothing necessary or self-evident about this assumption, the regress raises no objection to the *prima facie* appearance that events become and pass away and that they stand to each other in relations of temporal sequence and simultaneity.

(iii) It may be worth while to go into a little more detail about the question of temporal copulas and temporal predicates before leaving this topic. Let us take the sentences "It will rain", "It is now raining", and "It has rained." The utmost that can be done with the first is to analyse it into "There is (in some non-temporal sense of 'is') an event characterised non-temporally by raininess, and it is now future." The corresponding analyses of the second and third would be got by substituting "it is now present" and "it is now past", respectively, for "it is now future" in the analysis of the first. Even if this kind of analysis be accepted as correct, we have not got rid of the temporal copula "is now".

Another type of analysis would be to make "It will rain" equivalent to "There is (in some non-temporal sense of 'is') an event characterised non-temporally by raininess, and it will be present." The corresponding analyses of the second and third would be got by substituting "it is now present" and "it has been present", respectively, for "it will be present" in the analysis of the first. Here we get rid of two out of the three *A*-characteristics, but have to keep all three temporal copulas. In the previous kind of analysis we got rid of two out of the three temporal copulas, but had to keep all three *A*-characteristics. So, on neither kind of analysis, can we get rid of *all* temporal copulas; and, on both kinds of

analysis, we have to introduce at least one temporal predicate in addition to temporal copulas. Now the original sentences "It will rain", "It is now raining", and "It has rained" express the facts in the most natural and simple way without introducing temporal predicates in addition to temporal copulas. So both kinds of analysis seem to be worthless. They complicate instead of simplifying; they make nothing intelligible which was not intelligible before; and they suggest false analogies with non-temporal propositions.

Quite apart from the fact that such "analyses" serve no useful purpose, it seems to me that they fail to express what we have in mind when we use such sentences as "It has rained" or "It will rain." When I utter the sentence "It has rained", I do *not* mean that, in some mysterious non-temporal sense of "is", there *is* a rainy event, which momentarily possessed the quality of presentness and has now lost it and acquired instead some determinate form of the quality of pastness. What I mean is that raininess has been, and no longer is being, manifested in my neighbourhood. When I utter the sentence "It will rain", I do *not* mean that, in some mysterious non-temporal sense of "is", there *is* a rainy event, which now possesses some determinate form of the quality of futurity and will in course of time lose futurity and acquire instead the quality of presentness. What I mean is that raininess will be, but is not now being, manifested in my neighbourhood.

The fact is that what are called "statements about past events" are statements to the effect that certain characteristics, which constitute descriptions of possible events, have been and no longer are being manifested. What are called "statements about future events" are statements to the effect that certain characteristics, which constitute descriptions of possible events, will be but are not yet being manifested.

To sum up. I believe that McTaggart's main argument against the reality of Time is a philosophical "howler" of the same kind as the Ontological Argument for the existence of God. The fallacy of the Ontological Argument consists in treating being or existence as if it were a predicate like good-

ness, and in treating instantial propositions as if they were characterising propositions. The fallacy in McTaggart's argument consists in treating absolute becoming as if it were a species of qualitative change, and in trying to replace temporal copulas by non-temporal copulas and temporal adjectives. Both these "howlers", like the Fall of Adam, have been over-ruled to good ends. In each case one can see that there is something radically wrong with the argument; and one's desire to put one's finger on the precise point of weakness stimulates one to clear up linguistic confusions which would otherwise have remained unnoticed and unresolved. I suspect that plenty of other philosophers have made the same mistake as St Anselm and the same mistake as McTaggart. But, since they did not draw such startling consequences from their confusions as these eminent men did, these errors have been allowed to rest in decent obscurity.

3.2. *The Subsidiary Argument.* McTaggart's subsidiary argument to prove that *A*-characteristics are delusive is to be found in §§ 326 to 328, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*. In § 326 he starts by raising the question whether *A*-characteristics are qualities or relations. He says that it seems quite clear to him that they are not qualities but are relations. It seems to me, however, from what he says in the next few sections, that what he really means is that *A*-characteristics are *relational properties* as opposed to original qualities.

Now the temporal relations of events to each other are *B*-relations, and these cannot change in any way whatever. If there be moments, as distinct from events, the same will be true of their temporal relations to each other. And the same would be true of the relation of "occupation", which would relate an event-particle to the moment at which it happens if there were both moments and events. Now, if *A*-characteristics are relational properties, they must involve *temporal* relations of events or moments to *something or other*. And, since events or moments change in respect of their *A*-characteristics, the relata of these temporal relations cannot be other *events* or other *moments*. These relata will have to be terms which are not members of a *B*-series at all.



McTaggart then objects that it is difficult to think of any terms that could fulfil these conditions. We have to find a term  $X$ , which is not an event or a moment, such that to say that an event  $e$  is "past" or "present" or "future" is to say that  $e$  has to  $X$  a certain temporal relation  $R_1$  or a certain temporal relation  $R_2$  or a certain temporal relation  $R_3$ , as the case may be. And, since an event changes in respect of pastness, presentness, and futurity, we must be able to say that  $e$  sometimes has  $R_1$  to  $X$ , at other times has  $R_2$  to  $X$ , and at other times has  $R_3$  to  $X$ . McTaggart says that he cannot think of any term or any three relations that will answer these conditions. He does not pretend that this is a conclusive proof that  $A$ -characteristics are delusive. He thinks, however, that it should prepare us to accept the conclusion of his main argument without undue repugnance.

As McTaggart evidently does not lay much stress on this subsidiary argument, I shall not discuss it elaborately. I will content myself with pointing out a certain analogy and a certain difference between the view which McTaggart here takes of  $A$ -characteristics and the theory which I ascribed to Russell and discussed in Sub-section 2.24 of this chapter. According to that theory,  $A$ -characteristics are relational properties and not qualities, and the relations involved in them are temporal relations. Any utterance of the type-sentence " $e$  is present" means that  $e$  is simultaneous with *this*; any utterance of the type-sentence " $e$  is past" means that  $e$  is earlier than *this*; and any utterance of the type-sentence " $e$  is future" means that  $e$  is later than *this*; where *this* is some experience of the speaker's, or some particular which he prehends, at the time when he makes the utterance.

The analogy, then, is that this theory of Russell's and McTaggart's account of  $A$ -characteristics in §§ 326 to 328 of *The Nature of Existence* both make them to be relational properties which involve temporal relations. The differences are as follows. McTaggart denies that the relata of these relations can themselves be events or moments. But, on Russell's theory, the relata *are* events, viz., experiences or prehended particulars which are simultaneous with the speaker's utter-

ance of the type-sentence. McTaggart denied that the relata could be events or moments, on the ground that, if they were, events could not change in respect of their *A*-characteristics. But Russell's theory brings in the change in respect of *A*-characteristics in spite of the relata being themselves events. According to his theory, the change consists in the fact that, although the relatum is always an event, it is a *different* event on each different occasion on which a speaker utters the same type-sentence.

I have thus brought out the analogies and differences between the two theories. For a further discussion of Russell's theory the reader may be referred back to Sub-section 2.24 of this chapter.

#### 4. McTaggart's Use of the Specious Present.

It remains to notice the attempt which McTaggart makes to minimise the paradox of his denial of the reality of Time by appealing to the doctrine of the Specious Present.

McTaggart opens Chap. xxxiii of *The Nature of Existence* by admitting that the contention that temporal characteristics are delusive seems at first sight extremely paradoxical and is highly shocking to common sense. It is far more so than the contention that spatial characteristics are delusive. For it involves that each of us is profoundly mistaken, not only about external independent objects, but also about himself and his own acts and experiences. He reverts to this point in §§ 342 to 347, inclusive, and tries to show that the doctrine of the Specious Present makes the denial of the reality of Time less paradoxical than it seems at first sight. I will put what I take to be the essential point of the argument in my own way.

What any individual *S* prehends at any moment *t* as present is of finite duration; it stretches back from *t* by some finite amount *T*, where *T* is the characteristic duration of this person's Specious Present. Now, if presentness be not a delusive characteristic, the terms which it characterises must be either literally instantaneous or of finite duration. Let us consider these two alternatives in turn.

(a) If presentness belongs only to instantaneous terms,

everyone is grossly deluded whenever he prehends anything as present. For everything which is prehended is prehended as being of finite duration, and nothing that is of finite duration can really be present as a whole. The only terms which could have presentness are terms which no one ever prehends as such. The only terms which are prehended are of finite duration and therefore cannot have presentness. It may be remarked that this difficulty, if genuine, will arise even if we deny that there is a single neutral public time-series and confine our attention to the private time-series of each individual's experiences.

(b) Let us now take the other alternative, viz., that presentness characterises terms which are not instantaneous but are of short finite duration. No difficulty will now arise so long as we confine ourselves to the private time-series of various individuals and do not assume a public neutral time-series in which anything that has temporal characteristics has its own intrinsic position and duration.

But suppose that we do assume such a public neutral time-series. Then we can say of a certain state of prehension  $p_A$  in the individual  $A$  and of a certain state of prehension  $p_B$  in the individual  $B$  that they take place at the same moment  $t$ . Now it is possible that  $A$ 's Specious Present stretches back to a certain moment  $t_A$  whilst  $B$ 's Specious Present stretches back to a moment  $t_B$  which is earlier than  $t_A$ . In that case  $B$  will prehend at  $t$  certain events which happened between  $t_B$  and  $t_A$ , and he will prehend them all as present. Events simultaneous with these will not be *prehended* at  $t$  by  $A$ , since his Specious Present stretches back only to  $t_A$ .  $A$  will *remember* some such events, and will therefore judge that they are not present but past. Thus certain events which  $B$  prehends at  $t$  as *present* will be *contemporary with* certain events which  $A$  at  $t$  judges to be *past*. Now what is intrinsically present at a certain moment cannot be intrinsically simultaneous with anything which is then intrinsically past. Hence, either  $B$  at a certain moment prehends as present certain events which are in fact then intrinsically past, or  $A$  judges at a certain moment that certain events are past which are then in fact

intrinsically present. There must be either misprehension of, or false judgment about, the intrinsic temporal characteristics of events; and there may be both.

The upshot of the argument is this. Suppose we assume that there is a public neutral time-series, and that at a moment  $t$  intrinsic presentness belongs to everything that falls within a certain period  $T$  stretching backwards from  $t$ . Then we cannot reasonably identify  $T$  with the duration of any one individual's Specious Present at  $t$ . For the durations of different individuals' Specious Presents at the same moment may differ, and it would be quite arbitrary to identify  $T$ , the duration of the objective Present at  $t$ , with  $T_A$  rather than with  $T_B$ . Thus most people at most moments in their lives must be prehending as present certain events which are then past, or be judging to be past certain events which are then present. And it is quite possible that all people at all moments of their lives are subject to these temporal delusions.

McTaggart concludes that the assertion that temporal characteristics are delusive is not so paradoxical as it seems at first sight. It seems paradoxical because it forces us to treat as *misprehensions* all our prehensions of objects as having temporal characteristics. But we now see that, even if Time be real, all our prehensions of objects as having temporal characteristics must be largely delusive in detail.

I will now make some comments on this argument. (i) If the reader will refer back to the discussion of the Specious Present in Sub-section 1.3 of this chapter, he will see that the relevant part of that theory can be put in two different, but equivalent, ways. (a) We can say that at any moment  $t$  an instantaneous *act of prehension* grasps a total object which is not instantaneous but stretches back for a short period  $T$  from the date  $t$  at which the instantaneous act of prehension takes place. This is the alternative which McTaggart adopts in his argument. (b) We can say with equal propriety that one and the same instantaneous *event* is the object of every one of a whole compact series of successive instantaneous acts of prehension. This series constitutes a *process* of prehending which lasts for a finite time  $T$ , and throughout the



whole of this process the same instantaneous event *continues to be* prehended.

Suppose now that presentness belongs only to what is strictly instantaneous. On the first alternative, a person prehends at every moment a total object, which is not instantaneous, but is of finite duration and therefore cannot be present. On the second alternative, a person continues for a finite time  $T$  to prehend something, which is indeed instantaneous, but which is in fact past during the whole period throughout which it is being prehended.

(ii) On either alternative there is, no doubt, a certain amount of error in all prehension of objects as temporal. But surely it is absurd to suggest that it is comparable to the error which there would be if nothing were really temporal at all. For (a) it is concerned only with one temporal characteristic, viz., presentness. Nothing that has been said about the Specious Present prevents us from trusting our prehensions when they tell us that there is change and persistence, that some events overlap in time and others are separated, and so on.

(b) Even about presentness the error is very limited in extent. On the first interpretation, something which is in fact of finite duration seems to have a characteristic which in fact can belong only to what is instantaneous. But, after all, nothing seems to be present unless its duration is extremely short. And the different phases of any such short process are prehended as having degrees of presentedness which tail off to zero at its earlier boundary. It is perfectly easy to think of "pure presentness", as we think of "pure whiteness", viz., as an ideal limit which is suggested but not actually presented in prehension. We can think of this as belonging at any moment to the later (and maximally presented) boundary of any finite event which is prehended then as "present".

On the second interpretation, something continues to be prehended as present when it is in fact past. But, after all, nothing is thus misprehended for more than a very short time. If we are continually making this mistake about *something*, we never make it for more than a fraction of a second about *anything*.

(iii) If intrinsic presentness at any moment belongs, not to terms which are instantaneous, but to terms of finite duration, the misprehension on which McTaggart insists will be still more trivial. At a certain moment  $t$   $A$  prehends as wholly present a slice which stretches back to  $t - T_A$ . If what is present at  $t$  really has duration, the only mistake which  $A$  may be making is about the extent of this duration. It may be longer or shorter than  $T_A$ . If  $T$ , the duration of what is intrinsically present at  $t$ , is *greater* than  $T_A$ , the duration of  $A$ 's Specious Present at  $t$ , *all* that  $A$  then prehends as present really is present. His only fault is to fail toprehend as present a more remote slice which is in fact present. This more remote slice he will wrongly judge to be past. If, on the other hand,  $T$  is *less* than  $T_A$ , *part* of what  $A$  prehends as present really is so. His only mistake is that he also prehends as present a more remote slice which is in fact past. So there is no reason, on this hypothesis, to doubt that either the whole or some part of what  $A$  prehends as present at  $t$  is in fact present at that moment. The only point on which he is liable to make a mistake is as to precisely how far backwards from  $t$  the characteristic of presentness extends. This is a mere error of detail; but to prehend objects as temporal if nothing be in fact temporal would be a fundamental error in principle.

It seems to me, then, that, even if we accept McTaggart's account of the Specious Present, it does little to diminish the paradox of his doctrine that all temporal characteristics are delusive.



# BOOK VIII

## THE REAL FOUNDATION OF TEMPORAL APPEARANCES

### SECTION A

#### TIME AND ERROR

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come that which is in part shall be done away. . . . For now we see in a mirror darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am known. *I Corinthians* xiii

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#### ARGUMENT OF BOOK VIII, SECTION A

The fourteen chapters of Book VIII, Section A, form a continuous argument, but fall into certain groups. In the first chapter we consider McTaggart's general account of Error, his assertion that there certainly is true cognition and that there certainly is erroneous cognition, and his attempt to show that there may be misprehension. In the second chapter we consider certain preliminary remarks of McTaggart's about the connexion of error with *C*-series, i.e., those series whose terms are misprehended as events and whose generating relation is misprehended as the relation of earlier and later. The first point is that in all the experience that we know of, including mystical experience, objects are prehended as temporal. The second point is that, in order to explain the appearances, we shall have to postulate as many primary *C*-series as there are selves in the universe. In the third chapter we state and explain eleven of the twelve conditions which, according to McTaggart, must be fulfilled by the terms and the relation of *C*-series if the temporal and cogitative



appearances are to be "saved". In the fourth chapter I state McTaggart's theory of *C*-series in my own way, illustrate the various conceptions involved by means of geometrical diagrams, and develop an adequate symbolic notation for dealing with the theory. At this stage I do not trouble the reader with McTaggart's arguments for the various parts of the theory, nor do I make any criticisms as distinct from elucidations.

We come next to a group of three chapters in which I explain and criticise McTaggart's arguments for certain fundamental doctrines in the general theory of *C*-series. In the first chapter of this group I consider his argument to prove that the maximal end-terms of *C*-series are all perfectly correct prehensions. In the second chapter I consider his arguments to prove certain epistemological propositions about the pre-maximal terms of *C*-series. The most important of these is his attempt to show that all such terms are partly incorrect prehensions. In this connexion there is a very difficult point of interpretation. McTaggart introduces, and leaves unexplained, the notion of a prehension prehending itself. I try to clear up this very obscure notion, and to attach a meaning to it which shall be consistent with the rest of McTaggart's system and with the use which he makes of it in the argument under discussion. The third chapter of this group is concerned with McTaggart's grounds for postulating a second dimension, in addition to that already recognised in connexion with Determining Correspondence; his grounds for asserting that the generating relation of *C*-series is that of including and being included by other terms of the series; and his grounds for ascribing *intensive* magnitude to the terms of *C*-series, and *extensive* magnitude to the residue which remains when a less inclusive term is removed from a more inclusive term in a *C*-series. In this connexion it is necessary to embark on a rather elaborate discussion of the notion of magnitude in general, and of the distinction between extensive and intensive magnitudes; in order to criticise McTaggart's own statements, which turn out to be obscure and confused to the last degree.

Next we come to a group of six chapters in which the theory is tested by considering whether it complies with the eleven conditions laid down in Chap. XXXVIII and a twelfth condition which emerges in Chap. XLII. In the first of these we consider its compliance with the more general of these conditions. In the next five we go into detail and ask whether it is compatible with the appearances (i) of *sensa* and matter, (ii) of prehension, (iii) of judgment, (iv) of inference, and (v) of other ostensible forms of cogitation, such as supposition, awareness of characteristics, and imaging.

The last chapter is also concerned with a matter of detail. We take up again the question of ostensible volition and ostensible emotion, which were treated in Chaps. XXVIII and XXIX. We consider McTaggart's attempts to prove that certain kinds of emotion must, and that others cannot, exist at the maximal end-stage of a *C*-series. Finally we discuss the consistency of these conclusions with the introspective appearances and the general theory of *C*-series, and we enquire whether we are justified on introspective evidence in believing that we have such emotions and volitions as we seem to have.



## CHAPTER XXXVI

### GENERAL REMARKS ON ERROR

The first part of McTaggart's constructive theory of Time which we shall consider is his doctrine of the connexion between Error in general and the special delusion that there are temporal series of events. This is contained in the first eight chapters of Book VI of *The Nature of Existence*. It begins, in Chap. XLIV, with a general account of the nature of Error. I shall deal with this in the present chapter.

#### 1. There is both Veridical Cognition and Error.

In §509 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart develops a rather obscurely expressed argument to refute anyone who should maintain that there is no knowledge. The first point to notice is that, in this argument, McTaggart seems to be using "knowledge" as synonymous with "veridical cognition", i.e., knowledge or true judgment. This being understood, the argument may, perhaps, be most clearly put in the following way.

Either no one professes to believe that there is no veridical cognition, or at least one person professes to believe this. On the first alternative, no question arises and there is no one to refute. Suppose then that there is a person  $X$  who *professes* to believe that there are no veridical cognitions. We must first try to discover what might be meant by this profession. McTaggart considers two possibilities.

(i)  $X$  might be professing to believe an enumerative universal proposition, i.e., a conjunction of singular propositions of the form "The cognition  $C_1$  is false, the cognition  $C_2$  is false, . . . and the cognition  $C_n$  is false", where  $C_1, C_2, \dots$  and  $C_n$  are all the cognitions that have existed up to the time at which he makes his statement. (This might be compared with believing that all the Apostles were Jews.)



McTaggart holds that, if this is what *X* professes to be believing, he must be either mistaken or lying. The list of cognitions would not be exhaustive *unless* it included the belief which *X* professes to be having; for, if he has this belief, it is one of the cognitions which has existed up to the time when he makes his statement. On the other hand, it is impossible that a belief *about* each member of a class, taken enumeratively and in extension, should be itself a *member* of the class and thus a part of its own subject. Therefore there can be no such belief as *X* professes to be holding if we take this interpretation of his assertion. So there is still nothing to refute.

(ii) *X* might be professing to believe that the characteristic of being a cognition necessarily excludes the characteristic of being true, as, e.g., the property of being a scalene triangle necessarily excludes that of being equiangular. On this interpretation it is not impossible that *X* should in fact have the belief that he professes to have. But, if he has the belief, it is certainly false. For the supposition that this belief is true entails that it is false; and a belief whose truth would entail its falsity is necessarily false.

There remains a third alternative, which McTaggart does not explicitly consider. *X* might be professing to believe that it is a law of *nature* that no *actual* cognition *can* be veridical, though it is not a law of metaphysics or logic that no *possible* cognition *could* be veridical. This might be compared to believing, on inductive grounds, that no man can escape bodily death. Here again there is no reason why *X* should not have the belief which he professes to have. But here again, if *X* has the belief, it is certainly false. For, if it were true, *all* actual beliefs (and therefore this actual belief itself) would be false.

To sum up. The propositions "There *could* be no veridical cognitions" and "There *can* be no actual cognitions which are veridical" are not *internally* inconsistent. But each of them is inconsistent with the proposition that it is believed by someone. Hence, with regard to each of them, we can say "Either no one believes it or it is false."

In §510 McTaggart argues that there is certainly erroneous cognition. For it is certain that some people have believed at some times that there is erroneous cognition. If any of these beliefs are true, there is error. And, if any of them are false, there is error. And so, the belief that there is error is a self-justifying belief. Any attempt to deny that there is error in one place forces us to postulate the existence of error somewhere else.

McTaggart remarks in §511 that no such vicious endless regress need arise when we assert that temporal characteristics are delusive. It is quite true that my assertion that temporal characteristics are delusive will be prehended as an event in time if it is prehended at all. Suppose I assert that this prehension of my assertion that temporal characteristics are delusive is not really in time. If I prehend this assertion, I shall prehend it as temporal. And so on without end. But the mere fact that every term in an endless series of prehensions is infected with the same kind of error as the first term does not show that the first term was not infected with this error.

Undoubtedly this contention of McTaggart's is correct. But I think that there is a genuine difficulty in denying the reality of *becoming*, which is somewhat like the impossibility of denying the existence of error. Can we account for the appearance of becoming *anywhere* without postulating real becoming *somewhere*, e.g., in our own minds if nowhere else?

## 2. The Notion of "Phenomenal Truth".

In §519 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart points out an important fact about Error, which is obvious enough when it is brought to one's attention but is often forgotten by philosophers in the heat of philosophising. It is this. Every mistake must be *someone's* mistake. Whatever may be the cause of Error, error itself can exist only in the minds of beings who make false judgments or misprehend objects.

McTaggart remarks that, when a certain kind of error is common to the human race and is not such as to prevent the formation of an orderly and consistent system of experience,

it is often called a "Phenomenal Truth" by philosophers. People then tend to forget that what is only *phenomenally* true is not really *true* at all. Finally they hypostasise these Idols of the Tribe and set them up as objects which have "some kind of bastard reality, but not real reality". McTaggart thinks that Kant's "phenomenal objects" are an instance in point. As McTaggart truly says: "A phenomenal object . . . is nothing but an objectified error detached from the self who has the erroneous cognition. And this is impossible." I have no doubt that this kind of nonsense has been fostered by Hegel's unhappy practice of using the word "Appearance" to denote anything that is not completely self-subsistent, but is to any degree dependent on anything outside itself. This usage enabled Hegel to pursue his wonted course of converting platitudes into paradoxes by means of puns; but, like most of the other devices which he employed for this end, it has been most detrimental to clear thinking.

### 3. Misprehension.

If McTaggart is right in holding that temporal and spatial characteristics are delusive, it follows that there is misprehension and not merely misjudgment; i.e., we must actually *prehend* certain particulars as having characteristics which no particular possibly could have. For there is no doubt that I *prehend* certain sensibilia as spatially related, as extended, and so on; and there is no doubt that I *prehend* my own experiences as having duration and standing in relations of simultaneity or succession to each other. Moreover, if he is right in holding that all cogitations are really *prehensions* and that none are really judgments, it will follow that what appear to be false *judgments*, when introspected, are really *misprehensions* which we introspectively misprehend as judgments. So, in the end, *all* error will be misprehension, if McTaggart is right; though many misprehensions will themselves be introspectively misprehended and taken to be false judgments. It is therefore essential for him to give an account of Error which will allow for both veridical and delusive prehension.

Plainly it is difficult to admit the existence of misprehen-

sion, as distinct from false *judgment* and *misperception*, in our sense of that word as opposed to McTaggart's. (Misperception, in our sense of the word, consists in perceptually accepting propositions which are in fact false.) Misprehension would consist in being acquainted with a particular which then and there manifests to the person who is acquainted with it a characteristic which is other than any that it actually has at the time. An instance would be prehending a visual sensum as round and red, though in fact it has no colour or shape or is square and blue. Now some people would deny offhand that misprehension is possible at all. In §§ 513 to 518, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart struggles with this difficulty, and tries to explain how there can be misprehension at all and within what limits it must be confined. Obviously this is a vitally important point in his system, and it is unfortunate that I must confess that I cannot make sense of his doctrine. All that I can do is to put the reader in possession of the relevant passages, so that he can judge the theory for himself.

(i) In § 513 McTaggart makes the two following assertions. (a) "When I contemplate any case in which I prehend any prehensum *A* as having a quality *X*, it seems to me self-evident, not only that *A* then exists, but that it then has the quality *X*." (b) "And when in general I contemplate what is the nature of prehension, and what is the nature of the relation of a prehension to its prehensum, it seems to me self-evident that such self-evident correctness belongs to all prehensions." (In these two quotations I have substituted "prehension" for "perception" and "prehensum" for "perceptum" throughout.)

I think that the two principles may be restated as follows. (a) Whenever McTaggart prehend a particular as presently existing and as having a characteristic *X*, and raised the question "Does the particular which I am now prehending as presently existing and as now qualified by *X* really exist at present and is it really now qualified by *X*?" it was always self-evident to him that the answer is in the affirmative. (b) It is a self-evident general principle that, whenever any person *P*



prehends a particular as presently existing and as now characterised by any quality  $X$ , and raises the question "Does the particular which I am now prehending as presently existing and as now qualified by  $X$  really exist at present and is it really now qualified by  $X$ ?" it will be self-evident to  $P$  that the answer is in the affirmative.

McTaggart tries to confirm the second principle in the eyes of any one who might doubt its self-evidence by pointing out the awful consequences of rejecting it. It is quite certain that no prehension can be *proved* to be correct. If, then, the correctness of our prehensions is not *self-evident*, we have no right to believe that any of them are correct. Suppose, e.g., that at a certain moment I prehend a certain particular as now existing and being now blue. Suppose that I or anyone else should raise the question "Does the particular which you are now prehending as presently existing and as blue really exist now and is it really now blue?" Unless it is self-evident to me on such an occasion that there is now such a particular and that it is now blue, there is nothing for me to do but suspend judgment indefinitely about the question. Even if I could confidently answer that the particular which I am now prehending as blue does now exist, I could go no further. I could not confidently ascribe blueness or any other empirical characteristic to it. The result would be almost complete scepticism.

Before leaving this side of McTaggart's doctrine I will quote for future reference a remark in the footnote on p. 200 of Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*. "If I prehend a sensum as being round and yellow, then it is self-evidently round and yellow". (I have made the usual substitution of "prehend" for "perceive".)

(ii) In §514 McTaggart points out that there is a certain ambiguity in this principle of the self-evident correctness of prehensions. This ambiguity is connected with the fact of the Specious Present. Suppose that, at a certain moment  $t$ ,  $P$  prehends a certain particular as presently existing and as having the characteristic  $X$ . It is alleged to be self-evident that  $P$  will find it self-evident that the particular which he is then prehending as present and as characterised by  $X$  is then

present and *is then* characterised by  $X$ . But what exactly does "then" mean in this context? It might be thought that "then" means "at the moment  $t$ ". But, in view of the facts about the Specious Present, this will not do. Suppose that the particular in question had ceased to exist or had ceased to be characterised by  $X$  at a moment  $t'$  which is earlier than  $t$ . Then, provided that  $t'$  precedes  $t$  by less than  $T$ , the duration of the subject's Specious Present,  $P$  would at the moment  $t$  still be prehending this particular as presently existing and as now characterised by  $X$ . Yet in this case, by hypothesis, the prehended particular would have ceased to exist or ceased to be characterised by  $X$ .

In view of this McTaggart restates his principle as follows. Suppose that, at a certain moment  $t$ ,  $P$  prehends a certain particular as presently existing and as having the characteristic  $X$ . Then it is self-evident that  $P$  will find it self-evident that the particular which he thus prehends was present and was characterised by  $X$  during at least some part of his Specious Present which stretches backwards from  $t$ . On the other hand, it will not really be self-evident to  $P$  (for it will not be true) that this particular must be presently existing and characterised by  $X$  at the precise moment  $t$ . McTaggart refers to this as a "limitation on the self-evident correctness" of prehensions.

Before passing on I will point out what seems to be a perfectly plain consequence of this. If at any moment in my life I prehend anything as a round yellow expanse or as a squeaky noise, then, though nothing answering to these descriptions may have been existing at the moment at which this prehension happened, yet it is self-evident that something round and yellow or something squeaky, as the case may be, existed *either* then *or* very shortly before then.

(iii) In §515 McTaggart says that he finds it self-evident that *all* prehensions of objects as existing in time "must be subject to this limitation on their self-evident correctness".

(iv) In the same section he says that he finds it self-evident that there can be *no other* limitation on the self-evident correctness of prehensions than this. And he remarks, in a

footnote, that it follows that a prehension whose object was not prehended as temporal "would be self-evidently correct without any limitation". So far as I can see, the limitation in question simply consists in the fact that what is self-evident to the prehending subject is slightly less determinate in respect of the time involved in it than it might appear *prima facie* to be to a person unaware of the facts about the Specious Present.

(v) So far both the original principle and the modification of it have been stated in temporal terms. But McTaggart has tried to prove that nothing really has temporal characteristics. Still, ostensibly temporal terms and relations are *phenomena bene fundata*. What we take to be a *B*-series of events related by the relation of earlier and later really is a series of particulars, though these particulars cannot be events and the relation between them cannot be temporal.

McTaggart uses the term "*C*-series" to denote any series of non-temporal particulars which can be misprehended as a *B*-series. Thus a *C*-series is any series of non-temporal particulars whose terms are misprehended as events which have *A*-characteristics and change in respect of them, and whose generating relation is misprehended as that of earlier and later.

In §515 McTaggart restates the general principle about the self-evident correctness of prehensions in terms of *C*-series. The doctrine of the Specious Present would have to be transformed as follows. Suppose that a prehensum *O* occupies a certain position  $\pi$  in a certain *C*-series. Then any prehension of it which occupies this or any other of a certain short stretch of positions in a *C*-series, e.g., the stretch between  $\pi$  and  $\pi'$ , will be a prehension of *O* as present. We have now to apply this to the principle about the self-evident correctness of prehensions. The amended principle will run as follows. Suppose that a position  $\pi$  in a certain *C*-series is occupied by a prehension of a certain particular as now present and now characterised by *X*. Then it is self-evident that there is a non-temporal particular *O*, such that (a) *O* is characterised by *X*, and (b) *O* occupies in a certain *C*-series a position which

corresponds either exactly or nearly to that position  $\pi$  which  $P$  occupies in *its*  $C$ -series. The range of positions ( $\pi$  to  $\pi'$ ) which  $O$  may occupy in its  $C$ -series consists of those which are prehended as present in a prehension which occupies the position  $\pi$  in *its*  $C$ -series. The precise meaning of this will become clear at a later stage when we have explained in detail McTaggart's theory of  $C$ -series.

(vi) McTaggart ends §515 with the following remark: "The limitation of the self-evident correctness" (of a prehension) "is thus to a certain position in the  $C$ -series. And therefore we cannot know what prehension does guarantee until we know more precisely what the terms of the  $C$ -series are, and what the generating relation of the series is. And it is possible that we may find that the answers to these questions are such as to make the *limitation* of the correctness into a *qualification* of the correctness, in such a manner as to allow for prehensions being in some degree erroneous, while allowing them at the same time to give in some degree true knowledge." (I have, as usual, substituted "prehension" for "perception"; and I have italicised the words "limitation" and "qualification". I ought further to remark that, when McTaggart talks of "*the*  $C$ -series", this does not imply that he thinks that there is *only one* such series. He holds, as we shall see, that there are many of them. Unfortunately the plural of the word "series" is the same as the singular. What McTaggart means, if we may venture for once to be ungrammatical in order to be clear, is "the  $C$ -serieses".)

(vii) McTaggart professes to show in Chap. L of *The Nature of Existence* (Vol. II, pp. 256 to 257) that it is in fact true that the limitation of the correctness of prehensions constitutes a qualification of their correctness, in the sense required. But, for the present, he says, he is content to point out that, until we have decided what is the nature of the terms and the nature of the generating relation in  $C$ -series, we cannot be certain that misprehension is impossible.

We shall consider this attempt of McTaggart's in detail when we come to Chap. XLIII of the present work. But, without considering in detail the nature of the terms and the



generating relation of *C*-series, we can surely see that McTaggart's theory is barely self-consistent. Speaking in temporal terms, McTaggart has asserted it to be evident that, if I apprehend a particular as presently existing and having *X* at a moment *t*, then there is a particular which has present existence and is characterised by *X* at *some* time within a short interval which ends at *t*. The only uncertainty is as to *when precisely* within this short interval such a particular had present existence and was characterised by *X*. If this be translated in terms of *C*-series, it must surely run as follows. It is evident that, if a prehension *P* of a particular as presently existing and having *X* occupies a certain position  $\pi$  in a certain *C*-series, then there is a non-temporal particular which (a) has *X*, and (b) occupies in a certain *C*-series one or other of a short range of positions, of which one extreme corresponds exactly to the position  $\pi$  which *P* occupies in *its C*-series. The only uncertainty is as to *which* position within this short range is occupied by a non-temporal particular characterised by *X*.

I cannot see, then, that McTaggart has left any room whatever for the possibility that there is *no* particular characterised by *X* at *any* position in *any C*-series. Yet surely this is what he needs to allow for. Speaking in temporal terms, I say that at a certain moment I apprehended something as red and square. If the temporal reference is removed, we get the true proposition that a certain position in a certain *C*-series is timelessly occupied by a timeless prehension of something as red and square. If McTaggart's principle, as I understand it, be accepted, it follows that there *is* a timeless particular which *is* red and square and which occupies in some *C*-series a position which corresponds exactly or approximately to the position which this prehension occupies in *its C*-series. Yet, on the other hand, McTaggart certainly holds that nothing could possibly be red or square, for reasons which we have considered in earlier chapters.

I simply cannot reconcile McTaggart's statements in this chapter with his statements elsewhere about the kind and degree of misprehension which exists. The contradiction

seems so glaring that I can only suppose that I have altogether failed to understand his meaning. How *can* one reconcile his statement, e.g., in the footnote of p. 200 that "if I prehend a sensum as round and yellow, then it is self-evidently round and yellow", with the fact that I *do* prehend some sensa as round and yellow and with his denial that anything *could be* extended or coloured? It simply passes my comprehension altogether.

For the present we must just continue to make the supposition that misprehension is possible. Now, according to McTaggart, *all* cogitations are prehensions and none are really judgments, supposings, etc. Some of these prehensions are themselves prehended *as* prehensions when we introspect them. These may be called "Ostensible Prehensions". Other prehensions, when introspected, are misprehended. They appear to the person who owns them *not* to be prehensions, which in fact they *are*, but to be judgments, supposings, and so on, which they are not and could not be. These may be called "Ostensible Judgments", "Ostensible Supposings", and so on.

There is one and only one error which is present in *all* ostensible prehensions with which we are acquainted. In all of them the object is prehended as temporal; and, if McTaggart is right, nothing can have temporal characteristics.

On the other hand, some ostensible *judgments* are undoubtedly true. Therefore *some* of the prehensions which appear to us as judgments must be free from a certain kind of error which is present in *all* the prehensions which appear to us as prehensions. But, although there is less error *in* the former, there is more error *about* them. For the former are veridical prehensions which are introspectively misprehended as judgments, whilst the latter are partially erroneous prehensions which are correctly prehended as prehensions.

For the present we shall set aside those experiences which, when introspected, appear not as prehensions but as judgments, supposings, etc. We certainly have such experiences, and some of them appear on introspection as judgments about the timeless relations of timeless objects, such as numbers. And some

of them are certainly erroneous. So they will have to be considered in due course, if a complete theory of Error is to be given. But, in the next few chapters, we shall confine ourselves to Ostensible Prehensions, i.e., to those experiences which not only *are* prehensions (as *all* experiences really are) but also appear on introspection *as* prehensions.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### ERROR AND C-SERIES

In §519 McTaggart moots the question whether a single cause could be found for all Error. He is encouraged to think that this may be so by the fact that all our errors and misprehensions can be reduced to a comparatively few general heads.

Since all error reduces to misprehension, it seems likely that there will be some close connexion between Error and those real series which are misprehended as series of events in succession. For the only limitation which has been suggested to the self-evident correctness of prehensions is connected with the fact which appears *sub specie temporis* as the finite duration of the Specious Present.

In Chap. XLV of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart tries to establish two propositions as preliminaries to his general theory of Error and C-series. The first is that, in all ostensible prehensions which, *sub specie temporis*, occur in the course of history, the object is prehended as temporal. The second is that, if misprehension is to be explained by means of C-series at all, we shall have to postulate a plurality of co-existing C-series. I will now take these two topics in turn.

#### 1. The Objects of Ostensible *r*-Prehensions are prehended as Temporal.

McTaggart discusses this point in §§523 to 525, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*.

In the first place, it is *prima facie* true that, in all those experiences which appear on introspection as prehensions, the objects have been prehended as temporal. The only alleged exceptions to this rule are certain mystical experiences. Some people have claimed, with regard to them, both that they appear on introspection as *prehensions* and that their objects are prehended as *timeless*.



McTaggart thinks that, in the greater number of such cases, the experience would have appeared to be or to involve a state of judging if it had been more accurately introspected. It is easy to make a mistake in introspecting experiences which are strongly tinged with emotion, as mystical experiences are, and to think that one has been *prehending* *X* when one has really only had an intense conviction of the existence of *X*. I should consider that this mistake is always liable to arise because, as we have already seen, the discursive element of perceptual acceptance is liable to be overlooked even in the unexciting case of ordinary sense-perception and even by professional philosophers. If this is done by philosophers in the "dry" of their studies, what can we expect of mystics in the "green leaf" of their religious ardours?

In other cases of mystical experience, McTaggart thinks, there really is ostensible prehension, but its object is prehended as temporal. This ostensible prehension, however, has been accompanied by and confused with another experience which would appear on introspection as a *judgment* that the same object is *eternal*. The question of how such a combination of experiences is possible is deferred by McTaggart to Chap. LIV of *The Nature of Existence*, where it is treated on p. 306 of Vol. II.

We will also defer it until we deal with Ostensible Judging in Chap. XLVI of the present work. In the meanwhile we may remind the reader that McTaggart himself had mystical experiences, and was therefore much better qualified than most philosophers to theorise about them. Also he was probably much better qualified than most mystics to introspect accurately and to express clearly the findings of his introspection. Therefore it is reasonable to attach very considerable weight to his opinions about the nature of mystical experiences.

In § 524 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart puts forward a general argument to show that no experience which appears, when carefully introspected, as a prehension could fail to be a prehension of its object as temporal. It must be understood that he is confining his attention here to experiences which,

*sub specie temporis*, occur in the course of history, i.e., to what we called "*r*-prehensions", as opposed to " $\omega$ -prehensions", in Chap. xxxi, Sub-section 1.1, of the present work. The argument is as follows.

All *r*-prehensions, if carefully introspected, appear to be in time. Each appears to begin at a certain date in the mental history of the experient, to go on for a certain period, and then to be succeeded by other experiences. Now, if a person prehends an object and also prehends his own prehension of that object, there will always appear to him to be a temporal relation between the two. They will, in fact, appear to him as simultaneous. Now, if the prehension *P* appears to be in time when introspected, and its object *O* appears to the owner of the prehension as simultaneous with it, it is plain that *O* must appear to him as in time.

Some mystics might try to evade this argument by denying that their mystical experiences appear to them to be in time. McTaggart says that they would certainly be mistaken if they alleged this. For a mystic would have to admit, with regard to each of his mystical experiences, that it was between two other non-mystical experiences of his, e.g., between the experience of eating his breakfast and the experience of eating his lunch on a certain day. Now these two non-mystical experiences would certainly appear to the mystic to be in time. And he would have to admit that there would be no sense in saying that his mystical experience "came between" two ostensible events unless it were itself an ostensible event. McTaggart thinks that the mistake which such mystics make may be due to two causes. (i) They wrongly believe that the *prehensum* in such experiences is timeless, and they unwittingly transfer this supposed characteristic of the *prehensum* to the *prehension*. (ii) The mystical experience is a state of intense emotional excitement and concentration on its object. While it is going on its temporal characteristics are hardly noticed, and so, when it is over, they cannot be clearly remembered.

So McTaggart concludes that the objects of all ostensible *r*-prehensions are prehended as temporal. And he concludes

from this that any theory of Error which attempts to connect it with Time would primarily apply to all ostensible *r*-prehensions. Whether it would apply to those *r*-prehensions which are ostensibly not prehensions but states of judging, supposing, etc., is a question which must be deferred for the present. Now, of course, there is no Time, if McTaggart is right, and therefore "Time" can explain nothing. But there are real series, viz., *C*-series, whose terms are misprehended as events and whose generating relation is misprehended as that of "earlier than". So "to explain misprehension by reference to Time" means to explain it by reference to *C*-series. We must therefore concentrate our attention on the nature of the terms and the generating relation in such series. In the meanwhile we may note the following fact. When a person who misprehends a term in a *C*-series as temporal misprehends it as *past* or as *future* this misprehension never appears to himself on introspection as a *prehension*. It always appears as a *judgment* (whether of memory or otherwise) about the past or as a *judgment* (whether of expectation or otherwise) about the future. It is only when a person who misprehends a term in a *C*-series as temporal prehends it as *present* that his prehension appears to him introspectively as a prehension.

## 2. The Plurality of co-existent *C*-series.

If misprehension is to be explained by reference to *C*-series at all, there must be a plurality of such series. Every self-conscious mind appears to itself to be a persistent continuant, having a mental history which consists of a series of total events following each other in time. So in each individual there must be a real series of timeless terms of such a kind and so inter-related that this individual misprehends them as a *B*-series of successive total events. Thus there are at least as many *C*-series as there are self-conscious individuals. I propose to call each such *C*-series a "Primary *C*-series", since each will appear *sub specie temporis* as the total history of one of the Primary Parts of the universe.

Of course, the various *C*-series may be so correlated with each other that a meaning can be given to statements which

seem to involve a single common neutral time-series. We shall see, in due course, how McTaggart thinks that this can be done. But, for the present, the important points to notice are these. (i) There can be no *neutral* time-series, for there can be no *time-series* at all. (ii) There cannot be a single neutral *C-series*; though the plurality of private *C-series* may be so correlated with each other that we can logically construct from them something which may be called "the Public *C-series*".

Let us suppose that a certain self *S* prehends something else *O* as temporal. And let us suppose, e.g., that *S* prehends *O* as being successively red, white, and blue. Then there must be three states of *O* which are arranged in a series. And the one which *S* prehends as white must come, in this series, between the one which *S* prehends as red and the one which he prehends as blue. Since *S* prehends these three states of *O* as *successive events* in *O*'s history, the series in which they are terms must be a *C-series*. And it is obviously a *C-series* specially associated with *O*, and not with *S*. Now suppose that *S* is self-conscious and that he introspects his prehensions of these three states of *O*. He will introspectivelyprehend these three prehensions of his as three *successive events* in his own history. So the three states of himself which he prehends as his successive prehensions of the three successive states of *O* must be terms of a *C-series*. This *C-series* will be specially associated with *S* and not with *O*. If the mixture of error and correctness in *S*'s prehensions of *O*'s states is to be explained by reference to *C-series* at all, we shall have to take into account *both* the *C-series* associated with *S*, the prehender, *and* the *C-series* associated with *O*, the prehended thing. The error will be located in the prehender's *C-series*. The truth will consist in the correspondence between the terms and relations of the prehender's *C-series*, on the one hand, and those of the object's *C-series*, on the other.

In this example we have assumed that *O* is other than *S*. But we have also assumed that *S* is conscious of himself and his own prehensions. Now, if *S* should introspect his own acts of introspecting his prehensions of the states of *O*, they will



appear to him to be a series of events in time. Therefore these reflexive cognitions of the first order must form a *C*-series in *S*, and this will be a different *C*-series from that whose terms are *S*'s non-reflexive prehensions of the states of *O*. *S*'s mistakes about his own non-reflexive cognitions will be located in the *C*-series whose terms are his own first-order reflexive cognitions. And so on.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### NECESSARY CONDITIONS OF ANY THEORY OF ERROR AND *C*-SERIES

In Chap. XLVI of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart lays down a set of eleven necessary conditions which must be fulfilled by the terms and the relation of *C*-series if erroneous prehension is to be explained by reference to *C*-series. There is also a twelfth necessary condition, which he does not state until he comes to §565 in Chap. XLVIII because it could hardly be understood without the argument in Chap. XLVII about the nature of the terms in *C*-series. We will also defer it for the present, and will confine ourselves in this chapter to the first eleven conditions. They are as follows.

(I) The terms of any *C*-series must be such as could be parts of a substance which is spiritual and not material or sensal, which is divided into parts within parts without end, and which fulfils the conditions of determining correspondence. For, otherwise, a *C*-series could find no place in the actual world, as McTaggart claims to have proved it to be.

(II) A *C*-series must be such as to allow the existence of both correct and erroneous cognition. For, as we have seen, it is certain that both kinds of cognition exist.

(III) A *C*-series must be such as to allow the existence of all those kinds of error which McTaggart claims to have shown to exist.

(IV) Such a series must be of one dimension, and its generating relation must be transitive and asymmetrical. For, by definition, a *C*-series is any series which can be misprehended as a *B*-series. Now a *B*-series would be of one dimension, and its generating relation, viz., that of earlier and later, would be transitive and asymmetrical. Now nothing in the argument against the reality of *B*-series depended on these formal properties. So there is no need to suppose

that they do not really belong to the series which we mis-prehend as *B*-series; and it is a general methodological postulate that we are to regard our prehensions as correct in every respect in which there is no positive reason to think that they are erroneous. To this I would only add that no harm would be done by supposing that *C*-series have *more* than one dimension, if we could thereby explain any phenomenon, e.g., alleged instances of non-inferential precognition, which would otherwise be inexplicable.

(V) Any *C*-series must have at least as many terms as can be distinguished in any *B*-series which is an appearance of it. On the other hand, a *C*-series might have more terms than can be distinguished in any *B*-series which is an appearance of it. It is possible that a *C*-series should have an infinite number of terms, like the series of proper fractions arranged in order of magnitude. But it is also possible that it should be a discrete series consisting of a finite number of terms, like the series of integers between 0 and 100. This latter alternative would be quite compatible with the endless divisibility of all particulars. For the principle is that every particular must be endlessly divisible in *at least one* dimension, not that it must be endlessly divisible in *every* dimension.

(VI) According to McTaggart, any self, as it really is, has a set of parts each of which is an  $\omega$ -prehension. Each of these  $\omega$ -prehensions has a set of parts which are themselves  $\omega$ -prehensions. And so on without end. Now it is quite certain that none of our ordinary everyday prehensions, whether of external objects or of our selves or of our experiences, appear to be endlessly divided into prehensions of parts of their prehensa in the way in which  $\omega$ -prehensions are divided. Any satisfactory theory of error and the self and *C*-series must allow for this real or apparent difference between the ordinary prehensions which a self owns and the  $\omega$ -prehensions which form a complete set of parts of it.

(VII) It is certain that, *sub specie temporis*, a self may cogitate one and the same object continuously for a period of time. It is equally certain, subject to the same qualification, that a self may cogitate one and the same object on several

successive occasions, separated by intervals in which it is not cogitating that object. And it is at least arguable that, *sub specie temporis*, one and the same sensum might be sensed by a self either continuously for a finite period or on several separated occasions. Any satisfactory theory of Error and C-series must allow for the existence of prehensions which appear on introspection to be persistent or recurrent cogitations of one and the same object.

The next three conditions are concerned with the fact that our experience seems to change and to oscillate in certain respects in the course of our lives. They are as follows.

(VIII) A person's experience seems to change and to oscillate both in respect of the number of objects which he cogitates from time to time and in respect of its degree of clearness as a whole. Sometimes the temporal continuity of a person's experience seems, on reflexion, to have been broken altogether by finite intervals of dreamless sleep. Any satisfactory theory of Error and C-series must be able to account for these appearances. It must, e.g., enable us to attach a reasonable meaning to such a statement as the following: "My field of consciousness gradually diminished in extent and grew more and more confused until I fell asleep. Then I slept dreamlessly for an hour. And then my field of consciousness gradually increased in extent and grew clearer and clearer until it was back in the condition in which it was before I went to bed."

(IX) The clearness with which a person cogitates a certain object seems to be able to increase, diminish, or oscillate, whilst the clearness of his field of consciousness as a whole remains steady or changes in the opposite direction. Any satisfactory theory of Error and C-series must allow for this appearance.

(X) The correctness of one's cogitations appears to oscillate. At a certain time in his life a person may believe that *S* has *P*. At a later period he may cease to believe this and may come to believe that *S* has not *P*. And then subsequent reflexion or information may persuade him to alter his mind again and to believe once more that *S* has *P*. Now *S* must either have *P* or not have it, and both propositions cannot be



true. E.g., the proposition with regard to which these changes of attitude take place might be the proposition that ethical characteristics are analysable in purely psychological terms. Speaking *sub specie temporis*, we must say that this person's belief about *S* and its relation to *P* must have been successively true-false-true or false-true-false. Any satisfactory theory of Error and *C*-series must allow for the appearance of this kind of oscillation.

(XI) The three phenomena which we have mentioned in the last three Conditions suffice to show that there can be no very simple relation between differences of position in a *C*-series and apparent changes in consciousness. Many of these apparent changes take the form of *oscillations*, whilst apparent time flows *steadily* on and apparent events retreat *steadily* from the more to the less remote future, through the present, to the more and more remote past. This difference rules out any simple relation between differences in position in a *C*-series and apparent changes in consciousness.

Nevertheless, we must assume that there is *some* more or less systematic connexion between differences in the *nature* of terms in a *C*-series and differences in their *position* in the series. This postulate constitutes the Eleventh Condition. The ground for making it is the following.

It is pretty certain that there are *some* causal laws, which, *sub specie temporis*, may be said to connect the characteristics of events at different moments; even though no such laws can be known *a priori*, and though it cannot be known *a priori* that every event is completely determined in respect of every one of its characteristics. Now any such phenomenal law is a partly distorted transcription of a real law of the following form. "If the content of any position in a *C*-series has the characteristic  $\phi$ , then it necessarily follows that the content of some closely adjacent position in *this C-series* (or the content of a corresponding position in *another C-series*) has a certain other characteristic  $\psi$ ."

These are the eleven necessary conditions which, except a theory of Error and *C*-series satisfy them completely, it shall without doubt perish everlastingly.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

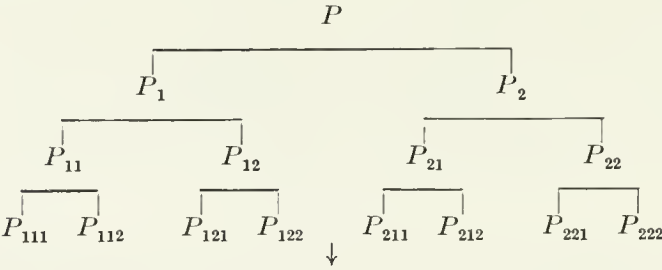
### STATEMENT OF THE THEORY OF *C*-SERIES

In this chapter I propose to state in my own way the essential points of McTaggart's doctrine about the terms and the generating relation of *C*-series. I think that the reader will find it helpful to have the theory put before him in synoptic form, uninterrupted by arguments on matters of detail. It will also be advantageous at this stage to develop a proper symbolical notation for the theory and to illustrate it with diagrams. As we saw in dealing with determining correspondence, McTaggart never helps himself or his readers by such devices. He performs his wonders in some mysterious way not easy to be followed by lesser men, and somehow on the whole manages to keep his head in spite of a bad notation and complete absence of diagrams. Whilst we must admire his skill and virtuosity, there is no reason why we should deny ourselves such help in a very difficult subject as may be obtained from a convenient and expressive symbolism and from geometrical illustrations. In later chapters I shall consider in detail the arguments by which McTaggart tries to justify particular parts of his theory.

#### 1. The two Dimensions of Selves and of $\omega$ -Prehensions.

In order to simplify the exposition as much as possible without omitting anything essential, I propose to take as an example the simplest possible kind of determining-correspondence hierarchy in which the primary parts are selves and the determining-correspondence relation is that of prehension to prehensum. This will be a whole *P*, consisting of just two selves,  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ , each of which prehends itself and the other and its own and the other's  $\omega$ -prehensions, in the usual way.

We will introduce the familiar diagram at this point, so that the reader may have the situation before his eyes.



Every secondary part in this hierarchy is an  $\omega$ -prehension in either  $P_1$  or  $P_2$  of  $P_1$  or of  $P_2$  or of some  $\omega$ -prehension in either  $P_1$  or  $P_2$ .

Now up to the present we have left it an open question whether selves, like  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ , have any other dimension beside that in which they are endlessly divisible into sets of parts which are  $\omega$ -prehensions, such as  $P_{11}$ ,  $P_{212}$ , and so on. And we have left it an open question whether  $\omega$ -prehensions, like  $P_{11}$ ,  $P_{212}$ , etc., have any other dimension beside that in which they are endlessly divisible into sets of parts which are  $\omega$ -prehensions of lower grade, such as  $P_{112}$ ,  $P_{2121}$ , etc. For all that we know at present the hierarchy might have been adequately represented by a *single straight line*  $P$ ; subdivided first into the two adjoined halves  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ ; then into the four adjoined quarters,  $P_{11}$ ,  $P_{12}$ ,  $P_{21}$ , and  $P_{22}$ , of which the first two together make up  $P_1$  and the second two together make up  $P_2$ ; then into the eight adjoined eighths  $P_{111}$ ,  $P_{112}$ , ...  $P_{222}$ . And so on without end. See Diagram 1 below:

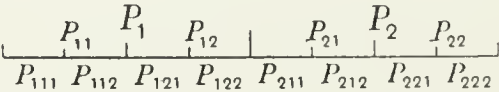


Diagram 1

But we must now consider the possibility that selves and  $\omega$ -prehensions may have another dimension beside that in which they are endlessly divided into  $\omega$ -prehensions of lower and lower grade. If that were so, the *lines* in the geometrical

illustration of Diagram 1 would have to be replaced by *areas*, as in Diagram 2 below :

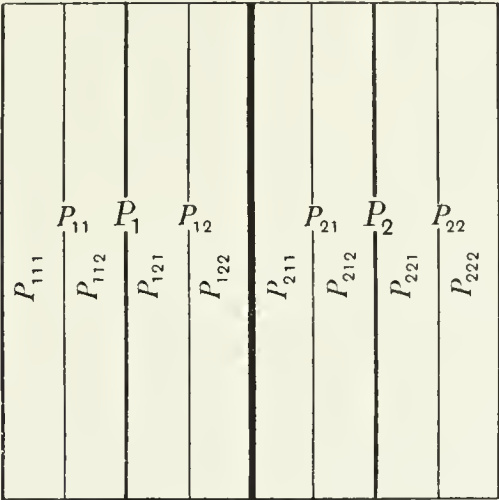


Diagram 2

In this diagram the two selves are represented by two adjoined rectangles which together form a square. The square represents the Primary Whole  $P$ , of which the selves  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  are the Primary Parts. The Secondary Parts of various grades, i.e., the  $\omega$ -prehensions of various grades in  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ , are represented by rectangles adjoined along their vertical sides and all of the same height as each other and as the original square. Thus the *horizontal* direction represents the dimension in which there is endless division into  $\omega$ -prehensions of lower and lower grade. The *vertical* direction represents a different dimension, which is possessed in addition by all selves and all  $\omega$ -prehensions. In the diagram it is assumed that *all* the selves and *all* the  $\omega$ -prehensions in the hierarchy which we are considering have *the same* extent in this second dimension. For all the component rectangles, and the square which they together make up, are of the same height.

For the present we will talk of the dimension in which selves and their  $\omega$ -prehensions are endlessly divided into  $\omega$ -prehensions of lower and lower grade as “the First Dimension”. And we will talk of the assumed other dimension, in



which all selves and all  $\omega$ -prehensions in our hierarchy are equally extended, as "the Second Dimension".

Now, if all selves and all  $\omega$ -prehensions have this second dimension, it is possible that they may be divided in it as well as in the first dimension. But it is neither necessary nor possible that they should be divided *endlessly* in the second dimension. It is not necessary; for the Principle of Endless Divisibility requires only that each particular shall have parts within parts without end in *at least one* dimension, and this condition has already been fulfilled through the endless division in the first dimension. And it is not possible that division in the second dimension should proceed without end, for the following reason. Such divisibility, according to McTaggart, leads to a contradiction unless the particulars to be divided form a determining-correspondence system in the dimension in which they are so divided. Now the only form of determining-correspondence relation which our experience enables us to conceive in detail is that of prehension to prehensum, and this has already been used up in connexion with the endless division in the first dimension. So we have nothing left with which to conceive a determining-correspondence hierarchy for the second dimension. Therefore, if selves and  $\omega$ -prehensions be divisible in the second dimension at all, they must have *simple* parts in that dimension. The number of such parts may be finite, like the number of integers between 0 and 100, or it may be infinite, like the number of fractions between 0/1 and 1/1.

Let us henceforth make the following suppositions. (i) That there is a second dimension in which selves and  $\omega$ -prehensions are divisible. (ii) That all those which fall into one and the same determining-correspondence hierarchy are *equally* extended in the second dimension. And (iii) that they are divided in the second dimension into a number (finite or infinite) of parts which are *simple and not further divisible in that dimension*.

These suppositions are not, in outline at any rate, wholly without empirical foundation. Consider, e.g., the stream of experience which, *sub specie temporis*, constitutes the mental

history of any self. *Prima facie* it is two-dimensional. On the one hand, we can imagine a cross-section taken across it at any moment. This will be an instantaneous "field of consciousness", and we can reasonably speak of it as "narrower" or "wider" according as the number of objects cogitated at the moment is greater or less. On the other hand, we can regard the history of the self as consisting of a series of successive cross-sections of the kind just mentioned. Thus, *prima facie*, there is one dimension which may be called the dimension of "extent" or "comprehensiveness" of the field of consciousness, and there is a second dimension which may be called the dimension of "duration" of consciousness. We shall see that there is in fact a close correlation between the former of these and our "first dimension" and between the latter of these and our "second dimension", though the relation is by no means a simple one.

## 2. The Nature of $r$ -Prehensions and their Relation to $\omega$ -Prehensions.

We are now in a position to understand the next step in the theory. Consider any first-grade  $\omega$ -prehension; e.g.,  $P_{12}$ , i.e., the one and only  $\omega$ -prehension in the self  $P_1$  of the self  $P_2$ . According to McTaggart, this is a *perfectly correct* prehension. It may fail to present  $P_2$  as having certain characteristics which it in fact has, but it cannot distort any of  $P_2$ 's characteristics or present  $P_2$  as having any characteristic which does not in fact belong to it. Therefore it is not a prehension of  $P_2$  as temporal. Again, according to McTaggart, it is *the only* perfectly correct prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ . Again, according to McTaggart, it is the only prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$  which does not mispresent  $P_2$  as *temporal*.

Now there are other prehensions in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$  beside this unique  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{12}$ . These are all to some extent erroneous, and, in particular they all involve the error of presenting  $P_2$  as temporal. They are what we have called " $r$ -prehensions" in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ . I propose to denote a typical  $r$ -prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$  by such a symbol as  $P_{12}^r$ . Thus, e.g., the two symbols  $P_{12}^r$  and  $P_{12}^s$  will denote two different prehen-

sions in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ , each of which is partly erroneous and involves at any rate the error of presenting  $P_2$  as temporal. What is the nature of these  $r$ -prehensions of  $P_2$  in  $P_1$ ? And how are they related to  $P_1$ 's unique  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_2$ ?

According to McTaggart, any term  $P_{12}^r$  is a certain kind of part of  $P_{12}$ . It is *co-extensive* with  $P_{12}$  in the first dimension, but it is *less extensive than*  $P_{12}$  in the second dimension. Since  $P_{12}$  is represented in Diagram 2 by a certain rectangle, and since the breadth of this represents extension in the first dimension whilst the height of it represents extension in the second dimension, it follows that any term  $P_{12}^r$  will be represented by a rectangle which stretches right across the  $P_{12}$  rectangle but falls entirely within the latter. In fact  $P_{12}^r$  is represented by a segment of the rectangle representing  $P_{12}$ , which is co-extensive in breadth but not in height with the latter. It does not follow that *all* such segments of the  $P_{12}$  rectangle represent  $r$ -prehensions in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ . It might be that only those which occupied certain positions in the  $P_{12}$  rectangle, and whose areas bore certain ratios to the area of the latter, were  $r$ -prehensions in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ . We shall see that this is in fact the case, on McTaggart's view. McTaggart calls *all* such parts of  $P_{12}$ , whether they be  $r$ -prehensions or not, "Fragmentary Parts" of it, in order to distinguish them from such parts as  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{122}$ . The latter are, of course,  $\omega$ -prehensions of lower grade than  $P_{12}$ . They may be called "Determining-Correspondence Parts" of  $P_{12}$ . If the reader will look at Diagram 2, he will see that the determining-correspondence parts of  $P_{12}$  are represented by rectangles which are *co-extensive in height* with the  $P_{12}$  rectangle but are *less extensive in breadth* than it.

All the remarks which we have been making about the first-grade  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{12}$  will apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the other first-grade  $\omega$ -prehensions  $P_{11}$ ,  $P_{21}$ , and  $P_{22}$ . Thus, e.g.,  $P_{22}$  will be the only completely correct prehension in  $P_2$  of  $P_2$ . There will be also in  $P_2$  a number of  $r$ -prehensions of  $P_2$ , each of which is partly erroneous and at any rate presents  $P_2$  as temporal. And each of these  $r$ -prehensions in  $P_2$  of  $P_2$  will be segments of the  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{22}$  which are co-exten-

sive with the latter in the first dimension but less extensive in the second dimension.

Let us now consider  $\omega$ -prehensions of lower grade than the first, and let us take  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{122}$ , the two second-grade  $\omega$ -prehensions which together make up  $P_{12}$ , as typical examples. Consider any fragmentary part  $P_{12}^r$  of  $P_{12}$ . In order to make the position quite clear I will introduce a new diagram at this point.

In Diagram 3 the rectangle  $A_\omega B_\omega C_\omega D_\omega$  represents the first-grade  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{12}$ . The two adjoined rectangles  $A_\omega B_\omega Y_\omega X_\omega$  and  $X_\omega Y_\omega C_\omega D_\omega$  represent respectively the two second-grade  $\omega$ -prehensions,  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{122}$ , which together make up  $P_{12}$ . The rectangle  $A_r B_r C_r D_r$  represents the first-grade  $r$ -prehension  $P_{12}^r$ . It has been shaded in the diagram. Since  $P_{12}^r$  is co-extensive with  $P_{12}$  in the first dimension, and since  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{122}$  are *each* co-extensive with  $P_{12}$  in the second dimension and are adjoined so as to be *together* co-extensive with  $P_{12}$  in the first dimension, it follows that  $P_{12}^r$  will consist of a set of two adjoined parts, of which one is co-extensive with  $P_{121}$  in the first dimension and the other is co-extensive with  $P_{122}$  in the first dimension. These are represented in the diagram by the two rectangles  $A_r B_r Y_r X_r$  and  $X_r Y_r C_r D_r$  which together make up the rectangle  $A_r B_r C_r D_r$  by adjunction along the vertical line  $X_r Y_r$ .

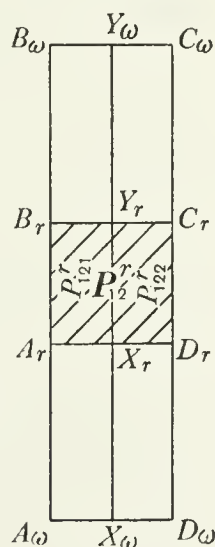


Diagram 3

It is obvious then that these two parts of  $P_{12}^r$  stand to  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{122}$  respectively in a precisely similar relation to that in which  $P_{12}^r$  stands to  $P_{12}$ . We may therefore denote them respectively by the symbols  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{122}^r$ . Thus  $P_{12}^r$  has a set of two parts  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{122}^r$ , which together just make it up; as  $P_{12}$  has a set of two parts  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{122}$ , which together just make it up. Now, if  $P_{12}^r$  is a partly incorrect prehension in  $P_1$  of that object  $P_2$  of which  $P_{12}$  is the one perfectly correct prehension in  $P_1$ , it seems reasonable to make a similar supposition about  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{122}^r$ . We assume that  $P_{121}$  is the one



perfectly correct prehension in  $P_1$  of the  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{21}$ . And we assume that  $P_{121}^r$  is a partially incorrect prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_{21}$ . According to McTaggart, it will certainly be incorrect to the extent of presenting its object  $P_{21}$  as temporal, and it may be incorrect in other respects too. Similarly, we assume that  $P_{122}$  is the only correct prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_{22}$ . And we assume that  $P_{122}^r$  is a partially incorrect prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_{22}$ , which misrepresents  $P_{22}$  at any rate to the extent of presenting it as temporal.

The theory which we have just explained can obviously be extended at once, *mutatis mutandis*, to the six other second-grade prehensions in the hierarchy and then to prehensions of any lower grade.

2.1. *The Notion of "States of Prehension"*. In order to introduce the theory as simply as possible I have stated it in rather too specific a form as regards the fragmentary parts of  $\omega$ -prehensions of lower grade than the first. I will now correct this over-simplification.

I said that  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{122}^r$ , e.g., would be *r*-prehensions of the objects  $P_{21}$  and  $P_{22}$  respectively. The correct account is that they would be "States of Prehension" of these objects. I will now explain what this means.

McTaggart introduces the notion of "States of Prehension" (of course under the name of "States of Perception") in the footnote to p. 227 of Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*. He discusses it further in Chap. L, §596. It is meant to be a more general term than "Prehension", since it covers both being a prehension and another alternative to which McTaggart does not give a name. The distinction is introduced in order to deal with that particular kind of error which Leibniz called "confused perception", i.e., the error of prehending as homogeneous and undifferentiated an object which is in fact heterogeneous and differentiated into parts.

Consider the *r*-prehension  $P_{12}$ . This is a prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ . Now  $P_2$  is *in fact* differentiated, e.g., into the two first-grade secondary parts  $P_{21}$  and  $P_{22}$ . And the  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{12}$  presents it as thus differentiated and not as homogeneous. For it contains as parts the two  $\omega$ -prehensions  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{122}$ ,

whose objects are respectively  $P_{21}$  and  $P_{22}$ . But it may be that  $P_{12}^r$  presents its object  $P_2$ , not as thus differentiated, but as homogeneous. For we know that  $P_{12}^r$  misrepresents its object to *some* extent, and we know that one possible form of misprehension is toprehend as homogeneous an object which is in fact differentiated into distinct parts. Suppose then that  $P_{12}^r$  is a confused prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$  and that it presents  $P_2$  as homogeneous instead of presenting it as differentiated into the two parts  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{122}$ . Then we cannot say that the two parts  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{122}^r$ , which together make up  $P_{12}^r$ , are *prehensions* in  $P_1$  of  $P_{21}$  and  $P_{22}$  respectively; for, if they were,  $P_{12}^r$  *would be* a distinct prehension of  $P_2$  as differentiated into at least two parts. On the other hand, they *are* related to  $P_{12}^r$  in a similar way to that in which the  $\omega$ -prehensions  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{122}$  are related to the  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{12}$ , as the reader will see if he looks at Diagram 3. And  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{122}$  *are* prehensions of  $P_{21}$  and of  $P_{22}$  respectively. In order to express this combination of likeness and unlikeness between  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{121}$  and between  $P_{122}^r$  and  $P_{122}$  McTaggart would say that  $P_{121}^r$  is a “*state of prehension, but not a prehension, in  $P_1$  of  $P_{21}$* ”. Similarly,  $P_{122}^r$  would be a *state of prehension, but not a prehension, in  $P_1$  of  $P_{22}$* .

Suppose, on the other hand, that  $P_{12}^r$ , though not a completely correct prehension of  $P_2$ , were not a completely confused prehension of it. Suppose, i.e., that  $P_{12}^r$  *does* present its object  $P_2$  as composed of two adjoined parts. Then  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{122}^r$  will be *actual prehensions* in  $P_1$  of  $P_{21}$  and of  $P_{22}$  respectively. The phrase “*state of prehension*” is meant to cover both the alternatives which we have now distinguished and illustrated. It is desirable to have a name for the property of being a state of prehension of an object without being an actual prehension of that object. I propose to describe any state of prehension of an object  $O$ , which is not a prehension of  $O$ , as a “*Prehension-Component corresponding to  $O$* ”. Thus, on the supposition that  $P_{12}^r$  is a *confused* prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ , which presents  $P_2$  as homogeneous and undifferentiated, I should say that  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{122}^r$  are *prehension-components* in  $P_1$  corresponding respectively to  $P_{21}$  and  $P_{22}$ . On

the supposition that  $P_{12}^r$  is so far *clear* and *distinct* that it presents  $P_2$  as differentiated into a set of two parts, I should say that  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{122}^r$  are *prehensions* in  $P_1$  of  $P_{21}$  and  $P_{22}$  respectively. And, on either supposition, I should say that  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{122}^r$  are *states of prehension* in  $P_1$  of  $P_{21}$  and  $P_{22}$  respectively.

We can now state accurately the theory about the nature of any  $r$ -prehension which is a fragmentary part of any  $\omega$ -prehension, so far as we have yet developed it. The statement is as follows. Let  $X$  be any  $\omega$ -prehension, and let  $X^r$  be any  $r$ -prehension which is a fragmentary part of it. Then  $X$  will be the only perfectly correct prehension in a certain mind of a certain object, whilst  $X^r$  will be a partly erroneous state of prehension in the same mind of the same object. The object will be either one of the selves or one of the  $\omega$ -prehensions in the determining-correspondence hierarchy to which the self who owns  $X$  and  $X^r$  belongs. The fragmentary part  $X^r$  may be either an *actual prehension* of this object, or it may be merely a *prehension-component* corresponding to this object. If  $X^r$  is an actual prehension, it presents its object as temporal. If  $X^r$  is a prehension-component, it will be an element in an actual prehension whose object contains, as an undiscriminated part, the object to which  $X^r$  corresponds. This actual prehension will present this total object as temporal.

### 3. Inter-relations of Fragmentary Parts of the same $\omega$ -Prehension.

So far no word has been spoken about series, though what we set out to explain was the nature of the terms and the generating relation in *C*-series. We are now in a position to tackle this part of McTaggart's theory.

Let us, as before, begin with an  $\omega$ -prehension of the first grade, e.g.,  $P_{12}$ . Consider any two  $r$ -states of prehension within this,  $P_{12}^r$  and  $P_{12}^s$ . Each of them will be a partially incorrect state of prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ . And each of them will be co-extensive with  $P_{12}$  in the first dimension but less extensive than  $P_{12}$  in the second dimension. We know, then, how  $P_{12}^r$  and  $P_{12}^s$  are related to  $P_{12}$ ; but how will they be related to each other?

McTaggart asserts and claims to prove that one of them must be *wholly contained* in the other *without exhausting* it. Let us suppose that  $P_{12}^s$  is more inclusive than  $P_{12}^r$ . Then their relations are illustrated in Diagram 4 below.

Diagram 4 is a reproduction of Diagram 3 with certain additions. As before, the rectangle  $A_\omega B_\omega C_\omega D_\omega$  represents  $P_{12}$ ,  $A_\omega B_\omega Y_\omega X_\omega$  represents  $P_{121}$ ,  $X_\omega Y_\omega C_\omega D_\omega$  represents  $P_{122}$ ,  $A_r B_r C_r D_r$  represents  $P_{12}^r$ ,  $A_r B_r Y_r X_r$  represents  $P_{121}^r$ , and  $X_r Y_r C_r D_r$  represents  $P_{122}^r$ . As before, the rectangles which represent  $r$ -prehensions or  $r$ -prehesion-components are shaded from *right* downwards to *left*. The new feature is the rectangle  $A_s B_s C_s D_s$  with its two adjoined vertical parts  $A_s B_s Y_s X_s$  and  $X_s Y_s C_s D_s$ . This is shaded from *left* downwards to *right*. Since it includes the rectangle  $A_r B_r C_r D_r$ , the latter appears shaded *both* from left to right and from right to left. This illustrates the fact that  $P_{12}^r$ ,  $P_{121}^r$ , and  $P_{122}^r$  are wholly included respectively in  $P_{12}^s$ ,  $P_{121}^s$ , and  $P_{122}^s$ . Attention must now be drawn to the two *horizontal* rectangles  $B_r B_s C_s C_r$  and  $A_s A_r D_r D_s$ . These are shaded *only* from left downwards to right, because they represent that part of  $P_{12}^s$  which is peculiar to it and is not shared with  $P_{12}^r$ . Taking them together, they may be called either the "Increment from  $P_{12}^r$  to  $P_{12}^s$ " or the "Residue of  $P_{12}^s$  less  $P_{12}^r$ ". Of course the smaller rectangles  $B_r B_s Y_s Y_r$  and  $A_s A_r X_r X_s$ , taken together, represent the residue of  $P_{121}^s$  less  $P_{121}^r$ . And the smaller rectangles  $Y_r Y_s C_s C_r$  and  $X_s X_r D_r D_s$ , taken together, represent the residue of  $P_{122}^s$  less  $P_{122}^r$ .

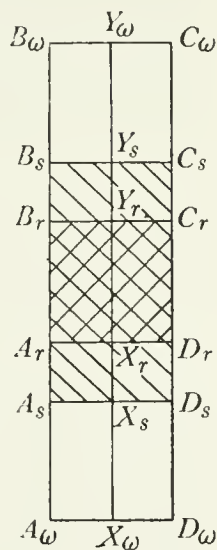


Diagram 4

It is evident, then, that *not all* the parts of an  $\omega$ -prehesion which are co-extensive with it in the first dimension and less extensive than it in the second dimension are  $r$ -states of prehesion whose object is the same as its object. All such parts of an  $\omega$ -prehesion are fragmentary parts of the latter. But some of them are residues, and residues are not states of prehesion at all. The fragmentary parts of an



$\omega$ -prehension include *both* the  $r$ -states of prehension in the same self of the same object *and* the residues or increments from one to another of these states of prehension.

I have indicated this distinction in the diagrams by the following convention. I represent the  $r$ -states of prehension within an  $\omega$ -prehension by rectangles, such as  $A_r B_r C_r D_r$  and  $A_s B_s C_s D_s$ , which extend *equally* in the second dimension above and below the horizontal bisector of the rectangle, such as  $A_\omega B_\omega C_\omega D_\omega$ , which represents the  $\omega$ -prehension of which they are fragmentary parts. They are thus *centrally* and *symmetrically* situated within the rectangle which represents the corresponding  $\omega$ -prehension.

It is now evident that, however numerous may be the  $r$ -states of prehension which are fragmentary parts of a given  $\omega$ -prehension, they fall into a *one-dimensional series* of the following kind. They form a symmetrical nest of "Chinese boxes", of which the outermost and most inclusive box is the  $\omega$ -prehension itself. McTaggart calls such a series an "Inclusion Series".

#### 4. Some Properties of Inclusion-Series.

McTaggart has a good deal to say in various parts of his book on limits and end-terms, discreteness and continuity, finitude and infinity, of series. I think it is plain that he was not completely clear or correct in his notions on these subjects. It will therefore be useful at this point to state the facts properly for ourselves, so that we shall have them ready for future use.

4.1. *General Remarks on Series.* (i) A series may be such that every term in it has an *immediate* predecessor or an *immediate* successor or both. By saying that a certain term *immediately* precedes or *immediately* follows a certain other term in a certain series we mean that both terms belong to this series and that no term of this series comes between them. Such a series is called "Discrete". An example is the series of positive integers 0, 1, 2, ....

On the other hand, a series may be such that between any two terms of it there is always another term of it. Such a

series is called "Compact". An example is the series of proper fractions arranged in order of magnitude.

Every series is either discrete or compact, and no series is both; but it is possible for precisely the same set of terms to form a discrete series in respect of one generating relation and a compact series in respect of another generating relation.

(ii) A series may have no end-terms, or one and only one end-term, or two end-terms. The three alternatives are illustrated respectively (a) by the series ...  $-2, -1, 0, 1, 2, \dots$ , (b) by the series  $0, 1, 2, \dots$  and (c) by the series of integers between 0 and 100 arranged in order of magnitude. Each of these three possibilities can occur with either discrete or compact series.

(iii) If a series has no end-term in a given direction, it may have a "Limit" in that direction. To say that  $L$  is the "upper limit" of a series whose generating relation is  $R$  has the following meaning. It means that (a) every term in the series has  $R$  to  $L$ , and (b) between any term of the series and  $L$  there is a term of the series. To say that  $L$  is the "lower limit" of a series whose generating relation is  $R$  has the following meaning. It means that (a)  $L$  has the relation  $R$  to every term of the series, and (b) between  $L$  and any term of the series there is a term of the series. Thus, e.g., the ratio  $1/1$  is the upper limit, and the ratio  $0/1$  is the lower limit of the series of proper fractions ordered by the relation "less than". Again, consider the series of regular polygons, viz., the equilateral triangle, the square, the regular pentagon, and so on, which can be inscribed in a circle of unit radius. The area of a regular polygon of  $n$  sides inscribed in a circle of unit radius is  $\frac{1}{2}n \sin \frac{2\pi}{n}$ . Consider the series of numbers of this kind which results by letting  $n$  take all integral values from 3 upwards. Evidently this is a discrete series with one and only one end-term, viz.,  $\frac{3}{2} \sin \frac{2\pi}{3}$ , the area of the inscribed equilateral triangle. But it has an upper limit, viz.,  $\pi$ , the area of the circle of unit radius.

If a series has *either* an end-term *or* a limit in either direc-

tion, it will be said to be "Bounded" in that direction. So a series has either no bound, or one and only one bound, or two bounds. If it has two bounds, they may both be end-terms or both be limits or be one an end-term and the other a limit.

(iv) It is evident that a series cannot have a limit unless it has an infinite number of terms. Every compact series, and every discrete series with less than two end-terms, must have an infinite number of terms. A series cannot have a finite number of terms unless it is both (*a*) discrete, and (*b*) possessed of two end-terms.

4.2. *Application to Inclusion-Series.* It is plain that any inclusion-series of *r*-states of prehension within an  $\omega$ -prehension has at least one end-term, viz., the  $\omega$ -prehension which includes all the *r*-prehensions of the series and is not itself included in any term of the series. We will call this the "Maximal End-term".

According to McTaggart, we have no means of deciding whether such a series has also an end-term in the opposite direction. It is logically possible that there should be an *r*-state of prehension which is included in all the other members and does not include any other. This would be comparable to the inscribed equilateral triangle in the series of regular polygons inscribable in a circle. If such an *r*-state of prehension exists, it may be called the "Minimal End-term". But it is also logically possible that there should be no such end-term, i.e., that every *r*-state of prehension in such a series should include another which does not exhaust it. This would, of course, entail that the series has an infinite number of terms; but McTaggart has no objection to this, provided that the terms are simple and indivisible in the second dimension. McTaggart holds that we have no empirical grounds for deciding with certainty between these two alternatives.

Again, McTaggart considers it to be logically possible for an inclusion-series to be compact, and logically possible for it to be discrete. And he thinks that we have no empirical grounds for deciding with certainty between these two alternatives. But he also asserts that every such series has "non-entity for its lower limit". Now there is an apparent incon-

sistency between the statement that such a series *may* have only a finite number of terms and the statement that it *must* have a lower limit. For only *infinite* series can have limits, in the strict sense defined in Sub-section 4.1 above. The inconsistency is, however, only verbal; and it can be resolved as follows. What McTaggart means is that such a series *either* has an end-term of minimal extent in the second dimension *or* has a lower limit which is a term of zero extent in the second dimension. Thus, on either alternative, it has a lower bound, in the sense defined by us in Sub-section 4.1 above.

We may therefore sum up McTaggart's doctrine on this point as follows. The various  $r$ -states of prehension within any  $\omega$ -prehension form an inclusion-series which has a maximal end-term and a lower bound. The maximal end-term is the  $\omega$ -prehension itself; the lower bound is *either* the minimal end-term, if there be one, *or* the lower limit, viz., a term of zero extent in the second dimension and of the same extent as the others in the first dimension. It is obvious that, if the series has no minimal end-term, the lower limit will be represented in Diagram 4, e.g., by a horizontal straight line (not shown in the diagram) which bisects  $A_\omega B_\omega$ ,  $X_\omega Y_\omega$ , and  $D_\omega C_\omega$ .

Now all the terms in an inclusion-series, except its maximal end-term, are states of partial *misprehension* in a certain mind of a certain one object which is *correctly* presented to that mind only by the maximal end-term. Therefore the series which remains, when the maximal end-term is conceived to be removed from an inclusion series, may be called a "Misprehension-Series". McTaggart, of course, calls it a "Misperception Series". If an inclusion-series be discrete, the corresponding misprehension-series will have a maximal end-term, viz., the immediate predecessor of the maximal end-term of the inclusion-series. If an inclusion-series be compact, the corresponding misprehension-series will have no maximal end-term. But it will have an upper limit. For the maximal end-term of the inclusion-series will then be the upper limit of the corresponding misprehension-series. So, on any alternative, every misprehension-series has an *upper bound*. And, on any alternative, every misprehension-series has the same



*lower bound* as the original inclusion-series from which it is derived by dropping the maximal end-term. Therefore every misprehension-series has *both* an upper and a lower bound. We shall see that McTaggart makes great use of this fact in his attempt to compare the amount of value in the pre-final stages of the universe with that in its final stage.

### 5. Correlation between different Inclusion-Series.

The next point to be considered is this. In what sense, if any, can we talk of two terms, which occur in different inclusion-series, as occupying "corresponding positions" in their respective series?

McTaggart deals with this question in §§613 to 616, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*; but it is necessary to refer also to certain remarks which he makes in §602 on the apparent occurrence of intervals of dreamless sleep in the life-histories of human individuals. Let us consider two inclusion-series which are as disconnected from each other as possible, for the difficulty of the problem will here be at a maximum. Consider, then, the inclusion-series whose maximal end-term is  $P_{12}$ , i.e., the  $\omega$ -prehension in the self  $P_1$  of the self  $P_2$ ; and consider, along with it, the inclusion-series whose maximal end-term is  $P_{34}$ , i.e., the  $\omega$ -prehension in the self  $P_3$  of the self  $P_4$ . Here there is the greatest possible degree of disconnexion, since the prehensions in the two series belong to *different* selves and are prehensions of *different* objects. The question is: "What can be meant by saying that a certain term  $X$ , in the series which ends with  $P_{12}$ , occupies a corresponding position to a certain term  $Y$ , in the series which ends with  $P_{34}$ ?"

The essential points in McTaggart's answer to this question may be put as follows: (i) The terms of an inclusion-series do not themselves have extensive magnitude. But the increments or residues which, when adjoined to a less inclusive term of such a series, produce a more inclusive term of the same series, do have extensive magnitude. Thus, e.g., neither  $P_{12}^r$  nor  $P_{12}^s$  nor  $P_{12}$  has extensive magnitude. But the increment which, when adjoined to  $P_{12}^r$ , gives  $P_{12}^s$  has extensive

magnitude. So too has the increment which, when adjoined to  $P_{12}^r$ , gives  $P_{12}$ ; and so too has the increment which, when adjoined to  $P_{12}^s$ , gives  $P_{12}$ . The extensive magnitude is of the same nature for all such increments, and therefore increments in the same series can be compared quantitatively with each other. Let us denote the increment which, when adjoined to a term  $x$  of an inclusion series, gives the term  $y$  of the same series, by the symbol  $I(x, y)$ . Thus, e.g., we shall have  $I(P_{12}^r, P_{12}^s)$ ,  $I(P_{12}^r, P_{12})$ , and  $I(P_{12}^s, P_{12})$ ; and these will all be comparable with each other in respect of the extensive magnitude which they all possess. McTaggart gives to this extensive magnitude the name "Quantity of Perception", and discusses it in §§ 572 and 573 of *The Nature of Existence*. For the present we must just take this notion on trust.

(ii) Let us denote the inclusion-series whose maximal end-term is  $P_{12}$  by the symbol  $\Pi_{12}$ , and let us denote the inclusion-series whose maximal end-term is  $P_{34}$  by  $\Pi_{34}$ . Let us first suppose that each of these series has a *minimal* end-term. Then, obviously, we can correlate the minimal end-terms of the two series with each other, and denote them respectively by the symbols  $P_{12}^1$  and  $P_{34}^1$ . Also we can correlate the maximal end-terms with each other, and denote them as usual by the symbols  $P_{12}$  and  $P_{34}$  respectively. If we want to make the correlation quite explicit, we can denote them by the symbols  $P_{12}^\omega$  and  $P_{34}^\omega$  respectively. Now consider any intermediate term  $X$  in the series  $\Pi_{12}$ , and any intermediate term  $Y$  in the series  $\Pi_{34}$ . How are we to decide whether  $X$  and  $Y$  do or do not correspond to each other in position?

Consider the increments  $I(P_{12}^1, P_{12}^\omega)$  and  $I(P_{12}^1, X)$  in the series  $\Pi_{12}$ . The first is the increment which, when adjoined to the minimal end-term, gives the maximal end-term. The second is the increment which, when adjoined to the minimal end-term, gives the intermediate term  $X$ . These two increments are comparable in respect of their extensive magnitude. Thus the ratio  $I(P_{12}^1, X)/I(P_{12}^1, P_{12}^\omega)$  is a pure number, characteristic of the position of  $X$  in its own series  $\Pi_{12}$ . In a precisely similar way the ratio  $I(P_{34}^1, Y)/I(P_{34}^1, P_{34}^\omega)$  is a pure number, characteristic of the position of  $Y$  in its own series  $\Pi_{34}$ . If and

only if these two ratios have the *same numerical value*, we say that  $X$  and  $Y$  occupy *corresponding positions* in their respective series  $\Pi_{12}$  and  $\Pi_{34}$ . If the former ratio should have a *smaller* numerical value than the latter, we say that  $X$  occupies a *lower* position in  $\Pi_{12}$  than  $Y$  occupies in  $\Pi_{34}$ . If the former ratio should have a *greater* numerical value than the latter, we say that  $X$  occupies a *higher* position in  $\Pi_{12}$  than  $Y$  occupies in  $\Pi_{34}$ .

If  $X$  and  $Y$  occupy corresponding positions, they will be denoted by symbols having the same index. Thus  $X$  will be denoted, e.g., by  $P_{12}^r$ , and  $Y$  will be denoted by  $P_{34}^r$ . If  $X$  occupies a lower position in  $\Pi_{12}$  than  $Y$  occupies in  $\Pi_{34}$ , it will be denoted by a symbol with a lesser index than the index of the symbol which denotes  $Y$ . Thus, e.g.,  $Y$  will be denoted by  $P_{34}^s$ , and  $X$  will be denoted by  $P_{12}^r$ , where  $r$  is less than  $s$ .

The reader should remark that this criterion of correspondence gives consistent results when applied to the two end-terms themselves. Suppose, e.g., that  $X$  is the minimal end-term of  $\Pi_{12}$ , and that  $Y$  is the minimal end-term of  $\Pi_{34}$ . Then the increment  $I(P_{12}^1, X)$  reduces to  $I(P_{12}^1, P_{12}^1)$ , which is obviously zero, since it is the "increment" which, when adjoined to  $P_{12}^1$ , gives  $P_{12}^1$  itself. Similarly, the increment  $I(P_{34}^1, Y)$  reduces to  $I(P_{34}^1, P_{34}^1)$ , which is obviously zero. Hence the two ratios both have the same numerical value, viz., zero; and the two minimal end-terms therefore occupy corresponding positions as judged by the criterion.

Again, suppose that  $X$  is the maximal end-term of  $\Pi_{12}$ , and that  $Y$  is the maximal end-term of  $\Pi_{34}$ . Then the increment  $I(P_{12}^1, X)$  reduces to  $I(P_{12}^1, P_{12}^\omega)$ , and the increment  $I(P_{34}^1, Y)$  reduces to  $I(P_{34}^1, P_{34}^\omega)$ . Hence the two ratios both have the same numerical value, viz., unity; and the two maximal end-terms therefore occupy corresponding positions as judged by the criterion.

If the reader wants a geometrical illustration of all this, he has only to look back at Diagram 4. Let us suppose that, in Diagram 4, the rectangle  $A_r B_r C_r D_r$  represents the minimal end-term of the series. Then the ratio which represents the position in the series of the term  $P_{12}^s$  (represented by the

rectangle  $A_s B_s C_s D_s$ ) is the ratio of the rectangle  $B_r B_s C_s C_r$  to the rectangle  $B_r B_\omega C_\omega C_r$ .

(iii) Let us next suppose that neither of the two series under consideration has a minimal end-term. It is very easy to make the appropriate modifications in the argument just given.

Each series will now have a *lower limit*, and this limit will in each case be a term of *zero extent* in the second dimension. Let  $x$  and  $X$  be any two terms in the series  $\Pi_{12}$ , such that  $x$  is contained in  $X$ . Then the increment from  $x$  to  $X$  will be denoted by  $I(x, X)$ . Let us keep  $X$  fixed, and let us identify  $x$  successively with smaller and smaller members of the series  $\Pi_{12}$ . We shall thus get a series of greater and greater increments. This will have an infinite number of members, since the series  $\Pi_{12}$  has no minimal end-term. And it will have an upper limit, since the series  $\Pi_{12}$  has a lower limit. The limit will be that which  $I(x, X)$  approaches indefinitely but never exactly reaches as  $x$  diminishes indefinitely but never exactly reaches zero extent in the second dimension. We may denote this limit of the increment-series whose general term is  $I(x, X)$  by the symbol  $\text{Lt}_{x \rightarrow 0} I(x, X)$ .

Now let  $X$  take the particular value  $P_{12}^\omega$ . Then  $\text{Lt}_{x \rightarrow 0} I(x, P_{12}^\omega)$  is the limiting value of the increment from any term  $x$  of  $\Pi_{12}$  to the maximal end-term of  $\Pi_{12}$  as  $x$  approaches indefinitely near to its lower limit of zero extension in the second dimension.

When the series was supposed to have a minimal end-term the position of any term  $X$  in it was expressed by the ratio  $I(P_{12}^1, X)/I(P_{12}^1, P_{12}^\omega)$ . Now that it is supposed not to have a minimal end-term we substitute for  $I(P_{12}^1, X)$  the limit  $\text{Lt}_{x \rightarrow 0} I(x, X)$ . And we substitute for  $I(P_{12}^1, P_{12}^\omega)$  the limit  $\text{Lt}_{x \rightarrow 0} I(x, P_{12}^\omega)$ . So the position of any term  $X$  in the series  $\Pi_{12}$  is now expressed by the ratio of the former limit to the latter. In precisely the same way the position of any term  $Y$  in the series  $\Pi_{34}$  will now be expressed by the ratio of

$$\text{Lt}_{y \rightarrow 0} I(y, Y) \text{ to } \text{Lt}_{y \rightarrow 0} I(y, P_{34}^\omega).$$



The two terms will occupy corresponding positions in their respective series if and only if these two ratios have the same numerical value.

(iv) Lastly, let us suppose that one of the series, e.g.,  $\Pi_{12}$ , has a minimal end-term, and that the other, e.g.,  $\Pi_{34}$ , has not. In that case the position of any term  $X$  in  $\Pi_{12}$  will be determined by the ratio of  $I(P_{12}^1, X)$  to  $I(P_{12}^1, P_{12}^\omega)$ , as in clause (ii) above. The position of any term  $Y$  in  $\Pi_{34}$  will be determined by the ratio of  $\text{Lt}_{y \rightarrow 0} I(y, Y)$  to  $\text{Lt}_{y \rightarrow 0} I(y, P_{34}^\omega)$ , as in clause (iii) above. The two terms will occupy corresponding positions in their respective series if and only if these two ratios have the same numerical value.

(v) Now *every* inclusion-series of  $r$ -states of prehension within an  $\omega$ -prehension has a maximal end-term and has *either* a minimal end-term *or* a lower limit which is a term of zero extent in the second dimension. Therefore in clauses (ii), (iii), and (iv) we have covered all the cases that can possibly arise in comparing two such inclusion-series. And we have shown how, in every case, the position of any term in one such series can be compared with the position of any term in another such series.

The reader will find my statement of the theory very different in detail from McTaggart's. But I have no doubt whatever that I have stated clearly and correctly what McTaggart had in mind. In my opinion McTaggart's own statements are not wholly clear or consistent, for reasons which I shall explain in due course.

5.1. *Some Comments on the above Test for Correspondence.* The test which has now been explained is intelligible and self-consistent, but of course there is no guarantee that every pair of inclusion-series will consist of terms which are correlated in correspondent pairs as judged by this criterion. It may be worth while to point out some ways in which such correlation between two inclusion-series might fail.

(i) Suppose that both series have a minimal end-term, but one of them is discrete and the other compact. Then, even if every different term in the discrete series corresponds in position to a different term in the compact series, there will

be infinitely many terms in the compact series which do not correspond in position to any term in the discrete series.

(ii) Suppose that both series are discrete, but that one of them has a minimal end-term and the other does not. Then, even if every different term in the former corresponds in position to a different term in the latter, there will be infinitely many terms in the latter which do not correspond in position to any term in the former.

(iii) Suppose that both series are discrete and that both have a minimal end-term. It might still be the case that one of them has more terms than the other. If so, there must be terms in the former which do not correspond in position to any term in the latter; though it is possible that every different term in the latter corresponds in position to a different term in the former.

(iv) Suppose that both series are discrete, that both have a minimal end-term, and that the number of terms in each is the same. It might still be the case that some or all of the intermediate terms are "out-of-step" with each other. It is easy to illustrate this. Consider the following two series, viz.,

$$0, 1, 3, 5, \dots 2n-1,$$

and

$$0, 2, 4, 6, \dots 2n.$$

Each contains  $n+1$  terms. Suppose that the positions of successive terms in the series  $\Pi_{12}$  were given by the ratios  $0/(2n-1), 1/(2n-1), 3/(2n-1), \dots$  and  $(2n-1)/(2n-1)$ . Suppose that the positions of successive terms in the series  $\Pi_{34}$  were given by the ratios  $0/2n, 2/2n, 4/2n, \dots$  and  $2n/2n$ . Then, although the number of terms in the two series would be the same, the intermediate terms in one series would fail to correspond in position with those in the other series.

In order that the terms of two inclusion-series may be capable of being correlated with each other term-by-term, in accordance with the criterion of corresponding position enunciated above, it is necessary that one or other of the following conditions should be fulfilled. Either (a) both series are compact; or (b) both are discrete, with minimal end-terms and with the same number of terms; or (c) both are discrete, and neither has a minimal end-term; or (d) one is compact, and

the other is discrete and without a minimal end-term. These conditions are necessary; but, as we have seen, they are not sufficient.

McTaggart does not go into this question; but I think it is plain that he assumes that all inclusion-series *can* be correlated with each other term-by-term, in accordance with the criterion of corresponding position enunciated above. His ground for this assumption appears to be the alleged empirical fact that all experiences, no matter in what self they happen, can be dated *sub specie temporis* in a single neutral ostensible time-series. In this connexion the reader should consult McTaggart's remarks about intervals of apparently dreamless sleep. These will be found in §602 of *The Nature of Existence*.

I strongly suspect that McTaggart tacitly assumed that, if *any* inclusion-series of *r*-states of prehension within an  $\omega$ -prehension is discrete, then *all* such series are discrete; that, if *any* is compact, then *all* are so; that, if *any* has a minimal end-term, then *all* have one; and that, if *any* lacks a minimal end-term, then *all* lack one. He may well have thought that this assumption is necessary and sufficient to ensure that all such series can be correlated with each other term-by-term in accordance with his criterion of corresponding position. If so, he was mistaken. It is plain from the discussion in this sub-section that the assumption which I have ascribed to McTaggart is more than necessary and less than sufficient to ensure this consequence.

## 6. Primary and Secondary Inclusion-Series.

Everything that we have said up to the present about inclusion-series has assumed that each such series ends with an  $\omega$ -prehension and consists entirely of *prehensions* in a single self of a single object. Now  $\omega$ -prehensions are *secondary parts* in the determining-correspondence hierarchy to which they belong. Therefore every inclusion-series which we have so far considered may be called a "Secondary Inclusion-Series". The symbol for any such series will always be a  $\Pi$  with *two or more* suffices, e.g.,  $\Pi_{12}$ ,  $\Pi_{122}$ , etc. A secondary inclusion-series may be of any grade, according to the grade of the  $\omega$ -prehension

which is its maximal end-term. In explaining how the terms of different inclusion-series are correlated with each other we took as examples two secondary series of the *first* grade, viz.,  $\Pi_{12}$  and  $\Pi_{34}$ . But it is evident that what has been said about correlation can be applied to *any* pair of secondary inclusion-series, no matter what their grade may be, and no matter whether they be of the same or of different grades.

The question that now arises is this. Can any meaning be given to the notion of a "*Primary Inclusion-Series*"; and, if so, is there any reason to suppose that there are such series? A primary inclusion-series would be one whose maximal end-term was not a *prehension* but a *self*. Its maximal end-term would be one of the *primary* parts in a determining-correspondence hierarchy, such as the self  $P_1$  or the self  $P_2$ . There is no doubt that McTaggart holds that there are primary inclusion-series, though he does not use the name. And there is no doubt that they play an essential part in his theory of Time and Error. But it is by no means easy to see precisely what a primary inclusion-series would be; and McTaggart's statements are far from clear.

The difficulty is as follows. In a secondary inclusion-series the various terms are all *states of prehension*. And, apart from the relation of inclusion which orders them in a series, they are all united in two ways. (a) They are all states of prehension *in* a single self. And (b) they are all prehensions *of* a common object. The maximal end-term is a perfectly correct prehension of this object, and all the other terms are partially incorrect prehensions of this same object. Now what could be the analogue to this in the case of a primary inclusion-series? We know that its last term will be one of the *selves* in a determining-correspondence hierarchy. One would, therefore, expect that its other terms would be *selves*. But this is quite impossible, and is certainly not what McTaggart has in mind. For this would involve a series of *selves*, included in each other like Chinese boxes; and we know that McTaggart holds that one self cannot have any part in common with another, and, *a fortiori*, cannot be included in another.

I think that it is quite possible to determine with certainty



what McTaggart had in mind, by referring to the footnote on p. 249 of Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*, by noting the subsequent uses which he makes of the notion of primary inclusion-series, by reflecting on the diagrams in this chapter and on his general theory of selves and  $\omega$ -prehensions, and by exercising a little charity and common sense. I will now explain what I believe to be McTaggart's doctrine on this subject.

The footnote on p. 249 runs as follows: "I am taking here the whole content of the self at any one point in the series as forming one perception." This supplies the clue to the whole problem. Let us consider, e.g., the self  $P_1$ , which is one of the two primary parts in the determining-correspondence hierarchy which we are considering throughout this chapter. And let us ask ourselves the question: "What would be meant by the primary inclusion-series  $\Pi_1$ , whose maximal end-term is the self  $P_1$ ?"

The first point to notice is that, according to McTaggart, the two first-grade  $\omega$ -prehensions  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{12}$  constitute a *set of parts* of the self  $P_1$ , i.e., together they exactly make up  $P_1$  without omission and without overlapping. This is illustrated in Diagram 2, where the rectangle which represents  $P_1$  is made up of the two rectangles which represent  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{12}$  respectively adjoined along a common vertical line.

Now  $P_{11}$  is the maximal end-term of the first-grade secondary inclusion-series  $\Pi_{11}$ . In view of this fact it can be written as  $P_{11}^\omega$ . Similarly,  $P_{12}$  is the maximal end-term of the first-grade secondary inclusion-series  $\Pi_{12}$ . It can therefore be written as  $P_{12}^\omega$ . They can therefore be said, in the words of the footnote quoted above, to be both "at one point", viz., at one and the same end of their respective series.

Suppose now that we take  $P_{11}^\omega$  and  $P_{12}^\omega$  together "as forming one perception", in the words of the footnote. (We must, as usual, substitute "prehension" for "perception".) This will mean that we count them as together forming a *single total state* of prehension in the self  $P_1$  of the *complex object* composed of the selves  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ . Since  $P_{11}^\omega$  and  $P_{12}^\omega$  are a set of parts of  $P_1$ , and since they are at corresponding positions in their

respective series, we shall thus have followed the directions of the footnote. We shall have "taken the whole content of the self...at one point of the series". And we shall have taken it as "forming one perception" (in McTaggart's sense of that word).

Thus  $P_1^\omega$ , the maximal end-term of the primary series  $\Pi_1$ , is simply the total state of prehension in  $P_1$  of the total object  $(P_1, P_2)$ ; and it is exactly made up by  $P_{11}^\omega$  and  $P_{12}^\omega$ , the two maximal end-terms of the secondary series  $\Pi_{11}$  and  $\Pi_{12}$  respectively. Considered in respect of its inclusion-relation, it counts as a maximal end-term and is denoted by  $P_1^\omega$ . But, considered in itself, and without reference to its relations to its fragmentary parts, it is simply the self  $P_1$  in its whole two-dimensional extent.

It remains to apply the same general considerations to the other terms of a primary inclusion-series. What would be meant by a term  $P_1^r$  in the primary inclusion-series  $\Pi_1$ ? It would be a total fragmentary state of prehension in  $P_1$  composed of the two correspondent fragmentary states of prehension  $P_{11}^r$  and  $P_{12}^r$ . It would be represented by a centrally and symmetrically situated rectangle stretching *right across* the rectangle which represents  $P_1$  and composed of two rectangles adjoined along a *vertical line*, one representing  $P_{11}^r$  and the other representing  $P_{12}^r$ . The object of  $P_1^r$  would be the same as the object of  $P_1^\omega$ , viz., the complex whole composed of the two selves  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ , i.e., the differentiating group of  $P_1$ . Since  $P_1^r$  is composed of a partially incorrect state of prehension whose object is  $P_1$  and a partially incorrect state of prehension whose object is  $P_2$ , it is itself a partially incorrect state of prehension of the complex object  $(P_1, P_2)$ . On the other hand,  $P_1^\omega$  is a perfectly correct state of prehension of the complex object  $(P_1, P_2)$ . If the reader will look at Diagram 5 below, and will compare it with Diagrams 2, 3, and 4, he should have no difficulty in understanding this account of primary inclusion-series.

In Diagram 5 the whole rectangle  $D'_\omega C'_\omega C_\omega D_\omega$  represents the self  $P_1$  extended in both dimensions. It is a reproduction of the left-hand half of the square in Diagram 2. The two

rectangles  $D'_\omega C'_\omega B_\omega A_\omega$  and  $A_\omega B_\omega C_\omega D_\omega$ , which together exactly make up the big rectangle, represent respectively the two first-grade secondary parts  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{12}$  of the self  $P_1$ . The former is  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_1$ , and the latter is  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_2$ . When we consider  $P_1$  as exactly made up, without omission or overlapping, of these two  $\omega$ -prehensions, we can regard  $P_1$  as a single total  $\omega$ -state of prehension whose object is the group  $(P_1, P_2)$  taken as a single unit. From this point of view the total self  $P_1$  is symbolised as  $P_1^\omega$  and is regarded as the maximal end-term of a primary inclusion-series  $\Pi_1$ . So the big rectangle  $D'_\omega C'_\omega C_\omega D_\omega$  represents, from this point of view,  $P_1^\omega$ , the maximal end-term of the primary inclusion-series  $\Pi_1$ . It will be noticed that the rectangle  $A_\omega B_\omega C_\omega D_\omega$ , which represents  $P_{12}$ , is a reproduction of the rectangle with the same letters in Diagrams 3 and 4.

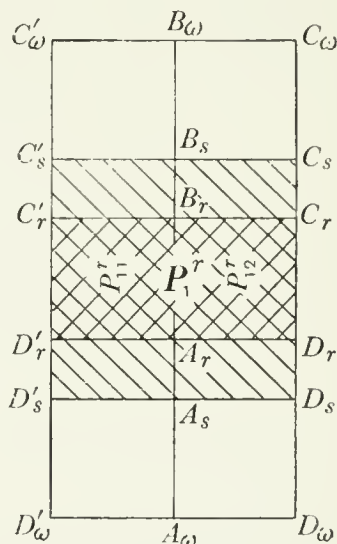


Diagram 5

Now consider the centrally and symmetrically situated rectangle  $D'_r C'_r C_r D_r$ , which is cross-hatched in the diagram. This is composed of the two adjoined rectangles  $D'_r C'_r B_r A_r$  and  $A_r B_r C_r D_r$ . The latter, as may be seen from Diagram 3 or Diagram 4, represents a certain  $r$ -prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ . We may call this  $P_{12}^r$ . The former represents a certain  $r$ -prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_1$ . It occupies the same position in its series  $\Pi_{11}$  as  $P_{12}^r$  occupies in *its* series  $\Pi_{12}$ . Therefore it may be symbolised as  $P_{11}^r$ . Taken together these two exactly make up a certain *total* state of prehension in  $P_1$ . Its "totality" consists in the fact that it is *co-extensive* with  $P_1$  in the *first* dimension, though not in the *second*. This is represented by the fact that the rectangle  $D'_r C'_r C_r D_r$  is co-extensive horizontally, though not vertically, with the rectangle  $D'_\omega C'_\omega C_\omega D_\omega$ . From an epistemological point of view its "totality" consists in the fact that the object of this total state of prehension in

$P_1$  is the *whole* of  $P_1$ 's differentiating group, viz., the group  $(P_1, P_2)$  as a single complex object. We denote this total state of prehension in  $P_1$ , which is represented by the rectangle  $D'_r C'_r C_r D_r$ , by the symbol  $P_1^r$ . And we say that it is a pre-maximal term in that primary inclusion-series  $\Pi_1$  of which  $P_1^\omega$  is the maximal end-term.

In Diagram 5 the rectangle  $D'_s C'_s C_s D_s$ , which is shaded from left downwards to right, represents  $P_1^s$ , a more inclusive term of the series than  $P_1^r$ . (Cf. Diagram 4.)

We may now summarise and generalise our account of primary inclusion-series as follows. Any primary inclusion-series  $\Pi_u$  is an inclusion-series whose terms are total states of prehension in a certain self  $P_u$ . The common prehensum of all these terms is that group of selves, taken as a single total object, which constitute the differentiating group of the self  $P_u$ . This group may, of course, include  $P_u$  itself, as in our example; or it may not. Every term in the series, except the maximal end-term, is a partly erroneous prehension; and, in particular, it misrepresents the group of selves which is its object as *temporal*. The maximal end-term of the series is a perfectly *correct*, though possibly not a completely *adequate*, prehension. It therefore presents this group of selves as *non-temporal*, and it does not present the group as material or sensal. This maximal end-term is *identical* with the self  $P_u$ , considered as extended in its two dimensions. The other terms of the series  $\Pi_u$  are co-extensive with  $P_u$  in the first dimension, but are less extensive than it in the second dimension.

I have no doubt that the above is a correct interpretation of McTaggart's doctrine. The only paradoxical element in it is the statement that the maximal end-term of a primary inclusion-series is *both* a certain *self* and a certain total *state of prehension* in that self. But this paradox is a clear consequence of McTaggart's doctrine that every self has a set of parts which are its  $\omega$ -prehensions of the members of its differentiating group.



### 7. Inclusion-Series, *C*-Series, and Ostensible *B*-Series.

At last we are in a position to deal with *C*-series and ostensible *B*-series. To call a series a "*C*-series" is to describe it by a certain extrinsic property. For it is equivalent to saying that it is a series which can be misprehended as a *B*-series. It is a series whose terms can be misprehended as *events* and whose generating relation can be misprehended as the relation of *earlier and later*. To call a series an "Inclusion-Series of *r*-States of Prehension within an  $\omega$ -Prehension" is to describe it by certain intrinsic properties of its terms and of their relations to each other. The question before us now is the following: "What is the intrinsic nature of *C*-series?" And McTaggart's answer is that every *C*-series is an inclusion-series of states of prehension, such as we have been describing. Nothing can be misprehended as an event except a term in such a series. And nothing can be misprehended as the relation of earlier and later except the relation of inclusion which holds between the terms of such a series.

But prehension involves, beside a prehended object, a prehending self and prehensions in that self. An inclusion-series of *r*-prehensions within an  $\omega$ -prehension is, in itself, only potentially a *C*-series. It does not become an actual *C*-series unless some self does actually misprehend its terms as events and its generating relation as that of earlier and later. Therefore our next business is to consider the misprehension by a self of an inclusion-series as a *B*-series.

Now we have seen that all the terms of any such inclusion-series, except the maximal end-term, are states of *misprehension*. And we have seen no reason to think that there are any states of misprehension in a self except the terms of the primary and secondary inclusion-series within that self. It is, therefore, evident that, in order to account for the delusive appearance of any *B*-series, we shall always have to invoke *two* inclusion-series. One of these will be the inclusion-series which is misprehended as the *B*-series in question by a certain self. The other will be the inclusion-series in which this self's misprehensions of the former series are located. In general

the two inclusion-series will fall within different selves. But they may happen to fall within the same self. This is the case when a self introspects and misprehends *itself* as an enduring continuant and *its experiences* as successive transitory occurrences which make up the history of this continuant.

It will be useful, in the present connexion, to refer to two such inclusion-series as follows. We will call one of them "time-projecting" and one of them "time-reflecting", with respect to the other. The terms of one *project* on to the other the delusive appearance of temporality; and the terms of the latter are *reflected* in the former with the delusive appearance of temporality. We must remember, however, that all terms in a time-reflecting series are themselves time-projecting, except the maximal end-term; for they are all states of misprehension which present their object as *temporal*. Moreover, all the terms in a series  $Y$ , which is time-projecting with respect to a series  $Z$ , may be time-reflecting with respect to another series  $X$  which is time-projecting. Consider, e.g., the three series  $\Pi_{112}$ ,  $\Pi_{12}$ , and  $\Pi_2$ . Of these  $\Pi_{12}$  is the series composed of  $P_1$ 's states of prehension of  $P_2$ .  $\Pi_{112}$  is the series composed of  $P_1$ 's introspective states of prehension of his own states of prehension in  $\Pi_{12}$ .  $\Pi_2$  is the series of  $P_2$ 's states of prehension of his total differentiating group. Now the fragmentary states of prehension in the series  $\Pi_{12}$  will present the terms in the series  $\Pi_2$  as a temporal series of successive total states in the history of  $P_2$ . Therefore the series  $\Pi_{12}$  is *time-projecting* with respect to the series  $\Pi_2$ . But the fragmentary states of prehension in the series  $\Pi_{112}$  will present the terms in the series  $\Pi_{12}$  as a temporal series of successive states of prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ . Therefore the series  $\Pi_{12}$  is *time-reflecting* with respect to the series  $\Pi_{112}$ .

We can now consider the details of McTaggart's theory on the present subject. As usual, I shall state it in my own way and shall develope a suitable notation of my own. In order to take the simplest possible case we will consider  $P_1$ 's prehensions of the other self  $P_2$  in his differentiating group. This group is supposed for simplicity to consist simply of himself and  $P_2$ . We have then two inclusion-series to consider. One

of them is  $\Pi_{12}$ , which is composed of  $P_1$ 's states of prehension of  $P_2$  and has for its maximal end-term the perfectly correct prehension  $P_{12}^\omega$ . This will be the time-projecting series. The other of them is  $\Pi_2$ , which is composed of  $P_2$ 's total states of prehension of his differentiating group  $(P_1, P_2)$  taken as a single total object. This has for its maximal end-term the state  $P_2^\omega$ , which is exactly co-extensive with  $P_2$  himself.

It will simplify the exposition and make no essential difference if we assume that these two inclusion-series are discrete and that each has a minimal end-term. We can then write out the time-projecting series  $\Pi_{12}$  at length as

$$P_{12}^1, P_{12}^2, \dots P_{12}^r, \dots P_{12}^s, \dots P_{12}^\omega.$$

And we can write out the time-reflecting series  $\Pi_2$  at length as

$$P_2^1, P_2^2, \dots P_2^r, \dots P_2^s, \dots P_2^\omega.$$

Now McTaggart makes the following hypothesis. He assumes that *any* term, e.g.,  $P_{12}^r$ , in the time-projecting series  $\Pi_{12}$  is a state of prehension whose object consists of *every* term in the time-reflecting series  $\Pi_2$ . This assumption is stated, in his own terminology, in the first sentence of the second paragraph of §543 of *The Nature of Existence*, which I will now quote. It runs as follows: "Each of these parts of  $G!H$  in the  $C$ -series of  $G$  will be a misperception of the terms of  $H$ 's  $C$ -series,  $c_1H$ ,  $c_2H$ , and so on." Now McTaggart's " $G$ " is the  $P_1$  of our example; his " $H$ " is the  $P_2$  of our example; his " $G!H$ " is the  $P_{12}$  of our example; and his " $c_1H$ ,  $c_2H$ , and so on" are the  $P_2^1$ ,  $P_2^2$ , and so on, of our example.

In order to bring out this assumption clearly in the notation, I shall proceed as follows. Consider any term  $P_{12}^r$  in the series  $\Pi_{12}$ . Since this is a state of prehension whose object is *all* the terms  $P_2^1, P_2^2, \dots P_2^r, \dots P_2^s, \dots P_2^\omega$  of the series  $\Pi_2$ , we can and must regard it as having a certain internal complexity. We can and must distinguish in  $P_{12}^r$  a factor which corresponds to  $P_2^1$ , a factor which corresponds to  $P_2^2$ , a factor which corresponds to  $P_2^r$ , a factor which corresponds to  $P_2^s$ , and so on up to a factor which corresponds to  $P_2^\omega$ . I propose to denote these factors in  $P_{12}^r$  respectively by  $P_{12}^{r1}, P_{12}^{r2}, \dots P_{12}^{rs}, \dots P_{12}^{r\omega}$ . If we take another term  $P_{12}^s$  in the series  $\Pi_{12}$ ,

the corresponding factors will, of course be denoted by the symbols  $P_{12}^{s1}$ ,  $P_{12}^{s2}$ , ...  $P_{12}^{sr}$ , ...  $P_{12}^{ss}$ , and  $P_{12}^{s\omega}$ . The whole scheme can be seen in a glance in the table given in Diagram 6 below:

|                    |                    |     |                    |     |                    |     |                         |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|-------------------------|
| $P_{12}^{11}$      | $P_{12}^{21}$      | ... | $P_{12}^{r1}$      | ... | $P_{12}^{s1}$      | ... | $P_{12}^{\omega1}$      |
| $P_{12}^{12}$      | $P_{12}^{22}$      | ... | $P_{12}^{r2}$      | ... | $P_{12}^{s2}$      | ... | $P_{12}^{\omega2}$      |
| .                  | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                       |
| .                  | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                       |
| .                  | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                       |
| $P_{12}^{1r}$      | $P_{12}^{2r}$      | ... | $P_{12}^{rr}$      | ... | $P_{12}^{sr}$      | ... | $P_{12}^{\omega r}$     |
| .                  | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                       |
| .                  | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                       |
| .                  | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                       |
| $P_{12}^{1s}$      | $P_{12}^{2s}$      | ... | $P_{12}^{rs}$      | ... | $P_{12}^{ss}$      | ... | $P_{12}^{\omega s}$     |
| .                  | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                       |
| .                  | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                       |
| .                  | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                  |     | .                       |
| $P_{12}^{1\omega}$ | $P_{12}^{2\omega}$ | ... | $P_{12}^{r\omega}$ | ... | $P_{12}^{s\omega}$ | ... | $P_{12}^{\omega\omega}$ |
| $P_{12}^1$         | $P_{12}^2$         | ... | $P_{12}^r$         | ... | $P_{12}^s$         | ... | $P_{12}^\omega$         |

Diagram 6

In Diagram 6 each column *above* the double line contains all the factors which together make up that state of prehension whose symbol appears at the foot of the column *below* the double line. Thus, e.g., the symbol  $P_{12}^r$  represents the state of prehension whose factors are symbolised by the entries from  $P_{12}^{r1}$  to  $P_{12}^{r\omega}$  in the column above it. So the series  $\Pi_{12}$  is really a *double array*, represented by a *row of columns* from left to right.

Before leaving this topic of notation, I will give a general rule for interpreting any symbol of the form  $P_{uvw...}^{rs}$ . The rule is as follows: (a) As always, the *first suffix* indicates the *self* in which the term occurs. So we can say at once that  $P_{uvw...}^{rs}$  represents a factor in a state of prehension in the self  $P_u$ . (b) The *rest of the suffix* indicates the inclusion-series in which the *object* of this state of prehension occurs. So we can say at once that the object of the state of prehension in which



$P_{uvw...}^{rs}$  is a factor is in the inclusion-series  $\Pi_{vw}$ . (c) The *first index* indicates the position in the *time-projecting* inclusion-series which is occupied by the state of prehension in which this term is a factor. So we can say (if the series is supposed to be discrete and to have a minimal end-term) that  $P_{uvw...}^{rs}$  is a factor in the  $r$ -th term of the inclusion-series  $\Pi_{uvw...}$ . (d) The *second index* indicates the term in the *time-reflecting* series which is the objective correlate of this factor. So we can say that  $P_{uvw...}^{rs}$  is that factor in the state of prehension  $P_{uvw...}^r$  whose objective correlate is the term  $P_{vw...}^s$  in the time-reflecting series  $\Pi_{vw...}$ .

We are now in a position to understand the last point in McTaggart's theory. He makes the following hypothesis in §543 of *The Nature of Existence*. Any pre-maximal term  $P_{12}^r$  in the time-projecting series  $\Pi_{12}$  will be a prehension of the *corresponding* term  $P_2^r$  in the time-reflecting series  $\Pi_2$  as *present*. It will present all the terms on one side of  $P_2^r$  in the series  $\Pi_2$  as *past*. And it will present all the terms on the other side of  $P_2^r$  in the series  $\Pi_2$  as *future*.

The question still remains whether the more inclusive terms will be presented as future and the less inclusive terms as past, or whether the less inclusive terms will be presented as future and the more inclusive terms as past. McTaggart discusses this question elaborately in Chap. LIX and LX of *The Nature of Existence* and decides that  $P_{12}^r$  presents all the terms of  $\Pi_2$  which are *more* inclusive than  $P_2^r$  as *future*, and presents all the terms of  $\Pi_2$  which are *less* inclusive than  $P_2^r$  as *past*. The detailed treatment of this question belongs to Section B of the present Book, viz., the section entitled *Time and Eternity*.

It is obvious from this that a term, such as  $P_2^r$ , which is presented as present by  $P_{12}^r$ , is presented as past by the more inclusive term  $P_{12}^s$ . Similarly  $P_2^s$ , which is presented as present by  $P_{12}^r$ , is presented as future by the less inclusive term  $P_{12}^r$ .

What are we to say about the maximal end-terms  $P_{12}^\omega$  and  $P_2^\omega$  of the time-projecting and the time-reflecting series respectively? (a) Since  $P_{12}^\omega$  is a *perfectly correct* prehension, it will not present its object as temporal at all. Therefore it will

present all the terms of  $\Pi_2$  as *timeless* terms arranged in a *non-temporal* inclusion-series, which is what they in fact are. It will not present them as *events* ordered by the relation of *earlier and later*, since they are not and cannot be such. (b) It is evident that  $P_2^\omega$  will be presented as *future* by every term in the series  $\Pi_{12}$  which presents it as temporal at all. For it will be presented as temporal only by the pre-maximal terms of  $\Pi_{12}$ . Since it is the maximal end-term of  $\Pi_2$ , it will be *more* inclusive than any term in  $\Pi_2$  which corresponds to any pre-maximal term in  $\Pi_{12}$ . Therefore it must be presented as future by any pre-maximal term in  $\Pi_{12}$ . Therefore it must be presented as future by every term in  $\Pi_{12}$  which presents it as temporal at all.

In our examples we have taken a time-projecting series in one self  $P_1$  and a time-reflecting series in *another* self  $P_2$ . And we have taken the time-reflecting series to be a *primary* series. We did this in order to make the exposition as simple as possible. It remains to show that this introduces no loss of generality. To show this we can consider the two series  $\Pi_{112}$  and  $\Pi_{12}$ , which are both in the same self  $P_1$ . The terms of  $\Pi_{112}$ , such as  $P_{112}^r$ , are  $P_1$ 's introspective prehensions of his own prehensions of the self  $P_2$ . These latter prehensions, such as  $P_{12}^r$ , are the terms of the time-reflecting series  $\Pi_{12}$ . Then the theory runs as follows.  $P_{112}^r$  is a state of prehension in  $P_1$  which presents his own state of prehension  $P_{12}^r$  as *present*. It presents all the less-inclusive members of  $\Pi_{12}$  as *past*, and it presents all the more inclusive members of  $\Pi_{12}$ , such as  $P_{12}^s$ , as future.

The last point to be noticed in the theory is the following. Whenever one introspects an experience, and it appears on introspection to be a *prehension*, its object appears to be *present*. When the object of a cogitation appears to be *past* the cogitation always appears, on introspection, to be a memory or a judgment and never a prehension. When the object of a cogitation appears to be *future* the cogitation always appears, on introspection, to be an expectation or a judgment and never a prehension. Of course, there are plenty of experiences which appear, on introspection, to be judg-

ments and not prehensions, although their objects are judged to be presently existing. E.g., I am now thinking of the fact that it is mid-day at Kieff. This experience, though it must really be a prehension, on McTaggart's view, appears on introspection to be a judgment and not a prehension. But I believe that mid-day at Kieff is now present.

Now the appearances and facts just mentioned must be interpreted in accordance with the theory. The interpretation which McTaggart puts upon them is the following. If  $P_{12}^r$  is an  $r$ -state of prehension which appears as such on introspection, then its prehensum must be  $P_2^r$ , i.e., must be at the position in  $\Pi_2$  which corresponds to the position occupied by  $P_{12}^r$  in  $\Pi_{12}$ . On the other hand, it is possible that an  $r$ -state of prehension and its object should occupy corresponding positions in their respective inclusion-series without the state of prehension appearing as such on introspection. It might appear as a judgment instead. Thus ostensible prehensions and their objects *certainly* occupy corresponding positions in their respective inclusion-series. But the object of a prehension which is ostensibly not a prehension but a judgment *may* correspond in position with the ostensible judgment.

McTaggart states the doctrine which I have just explained in §544 of *The Nature of Existence*. It seems *prima facie* that there is some inconsistency between this part of his theory and his statement that *every* term in  $\Pi_{12}$  is a state of prehension whose object is *every* term in  $\Pi_2$ . I think that the apparent inconsistency can be removed by referring to two points which have already been made in this chapter. The first is the distinction, which I explained in Sub-section 2.1, between actual prehensions and prehension-components. The second is the proposition, which I asserted and illustrated in the present Section, that any  $r$ -state of prehension, such as  $P_{12}^r$ , must consist of a number of factors, such as  $P_{12}^{r,s}$ , each of which corresponds to a different term, such as  $P_2^s$ , in the total object  $\Pi_2$ . Suppose that  $P_{12}^r$  is an ostensible prehension of a certain ostensible event. Then I take McTaggart's view to be accurately expressible as follows. Although the total object of  $P_{12}^r$  does in fact comprise, not only  $P_2^r$ , but all the other

terms from  $P_2^1$  to  $P_2^\omega$  in the series  $\Pi_2$ , yet only  $P_2^r$  is discriminated and presented distinctly in  $P_{12}^r$ . The other terms of  $\Pi_2$  are presented in  $P_{12}^r$  only as a vague undiscriminated background if  $P_{12}^r$  is an ostensible *prehension* of a certain ostensible event. If, on the other hand,  $P_{12}^r$  were an ostensible *memory*, the situation would differ in the following way. The total object of  $P_{12}^r$  would, as in the former case, comprise *all* the terms in the series  $\Pi_2$ . But now it would not be the *corresponding* term  $P_2^r$  which is discriminated and presented distinctly in  $P_{12}^r$ . Some term in  $\Pi_2$  which is less inclusive than  $P_2^r$ , e.g.,  $P_2^{r-x}$ , would be discriminated and presented distinctly in  $P_{12}^r$ , whilst  $P_2^r$  would be presented only as an undiscriminated part of a vague background.

In the first case, presumably, the factor  $P_{12}^{rr}$  in the total state of prehension  $P_{12}^r$  would predominate in some way over the rest. In the second case, presumably, the factor  $P_{12}^{r(r-x)}$  would predominate in a similar way over all the rest. In no case, presumably, is  $P_{12}^r$  (where  $r < \omega$ ) an *actual prehension* of all the terms in the series  $\Pi_2$ . It is always a state of prehension in which at most a few of these terms are discriminated and presented distinctly, whilst the rest of them are presented only as undiscriminated items in a vaguely prehended background.

## 8. Summary of McTaggart's Doctrine.

I have now fulfilled my undertaking to state in my own way the essential points of McTaggart's doctrine about the terms and the generating-relation of C-series; to illustrate it with diagrams; and to develop a suitable notation for dealing with it. It will now be worth while to gather the threads into a single skein in the form of a summary.

(i) Selves and their experiences are at least two-dimensional particulars. In the Theory of Determining Correspondence, as applied to selves and their  $\omega$ -prehensions, we confined ourselves to one of these dimensions and ignored the other. This first dimension, in which selves are divided into sets of parts whose members are  $\omega$ -prehensions and so on without end, corresponds to what we should ordinarily call the "breadth



or extent of a self's field of consciousness". In future we will call this the "Determining-Correspondence Dimension". The second dimension corresponds to what is misprehended as the duration of a self's mental history. In future we will call this the "*C*-dimension".

(ii) A self and all its  $\omega$ -prehensions have the same extent in the *C*-dimension; but, of course, any  $\omega$ -prehension in a self is less extensive than it in the determining-correspondence dimension.

(iii) A self and all its  $\omega$ -prehensions are divided into the same number of parts of a certain kind in the *C*-dimension. These are called "Fragmentary Parts". Any fragmentary part of an  $\omega$ -prehension is co-extensive with the latter in the determining-correspondence dimension, and is less extensive in the *C*-dimension. But not all fragmentary parts of an  $\omega$ -prehension are of the same nature. Some are states of prehension; others are not states of prehension, but are "Residues" or "Increments" which, when adjoined to a fragmentary part which is a state of prehension, give another state of prehension in the same self of the same object.

(iv) Each fragmentary part of a given  $\omega$ -prehension which is a state of prehension is *in* the same self and *of* the same object as that  $\omega$ -prehension. But residues are not states of prehension at all.

(v) A state of prehension *S* whose object is *O* may be either (a) an actual prehension of *O*, or (b) a prehension-component corresponding to *O*. In the latter case *O* will be part of a wider object  $\Omega$  and *S* will be part of a certain actual prehension  $\Sigma$  whose object is  $\Omega$ . And  $\Sigma$  will be a partly confused prehension of the object  $\Omega$ , in which the part *O* of  $\Omega$  will not be presented clearly and distinctly as such.

(vi) Each fragmentary part of a given *self* is co-extensive with that self in the determining-correspondence dimension but is less extensive than it in the *C*-dimension. A fragmentary part of a self may be either a state of prehension or a residue. The latter is not a state of prehension.

(vii) Each fragmentary part of a given *self* which is a state of prehension is a total state whose object is that group of

selves which is the differentiating group of the given self, considered as a single complex object.

(viii) All the  $r$ -states of prehension within a given  $\omega$ -prehension are partially incorrect states of prehension of their common object. In particular, they all mispresent this common object as temporal. The  $\omega$ -prehension itself is a perfectly correct (though not necessarily a completely adequate) prehension of this common object. It therefore presents the object as non-temporal.

(ix) All the fragmentary parts of a given *self* which are states of prehension are partially incorrect states whose object is that group of selves which is the differentiating group of the given self, considered as a single complex object. In particular, they all mispresent this common object as temporal.

(x) All the fragmentary parts of a given self or a given  $\omega$ -prehension which are states of prehension form a series, like a series of Chinese boxes. This is called an "Inclusion-Series". The self or the  $\omega$ -prehension, as the case may be, is the maximal end-term of such an inclusion-series. An inclusion-series is said to be "primary" or "secondary" according to whether its maximal end-term is a self or an  $\omega$ -prehension.

(xi) The maximal end-term of a primary inclusion-series, though it is, from one point of view, simply a self in its complete two-dimensional extent, is, from another point of view, a perfectly correct state of prehension whose object is the differentiating group of that self, taken as a single complex object. It therefore presents this object as non-temporal.

(xii) Every inclusion-series has either a minimal end-term or a lower limit. We have no means of deciding conclusively between these two alternatives. If it has no minimal end-term, its lower limit is a term of zero extent in the *C*-dimension and co-extensive with the terms of the series in the determining-correspondence dimension.

(xiii) If an inclusion-series has no minimal end-term, it *must* have an infinite number of terms. And, even if it has a minimal end-term, it *may* have an infinite number

of terms; for it may be compact. We have no means of deciding conclusively whether an inclusion-series is compact or discrete.

(xiv) In any case, every  $r$ -state of prehension is "simple" in the  $C$ -dimension, in the sense that it has not a homogeneous set of parts all of whose members are  $r$ -states of prehension. On the other hand, any  $r$ -state of prehension (except the minimal one, if such there be) has a heterogeneous set of two parts, one member of which is a less inclusive  $r$ -state of prehension and the other member of which is a residue. And an  $r$ -state of prehension may have many such sets of two heterogeneous parts; it may even have an infinite number of such sets.

(xv) Even when two inclusion-series consist of states of prehension *in* different selves of different objects there is a criterion by which we can compare the position of a term in one of them with the position of a term in the other. In the first place, the maximal end-terms of the two series will correspond to each other. Secondly, if both have minimal end-terms or both have lower limits, these will correspond to each other. Lastly, if one has a minimal end-term and is compact, whilst the other has no minimal end-term, the minimal end-term of the former will correspond to the lower limit of the latter. Intermediate terms occupy corresponding positions in their respective inclusion-series if and only if the following condition is fulfilled. Let  $S$  and  $S'$  be the two inclusion-series, and let  $X$  and  $X'$  be the terms whose positions in  $S$  and  $S'$  respectively are to be compared. Then the condition for correspondence of position is this. The increment from the lower bound of  $S$  to the term  $X$  must bear to the increment from the lower bound to the maximal end-term of  $S$  the same ratio as the increment from the lower bound of  $S'$  to the term  $X'$  bears to the increment from the lower bound to the maximal end-term of  $S'$ .

(xvi) An ostensible  $B$ -series is always a misprehended inclusion-series of  $r$ -states of prehension within an  $\omega$ -prehension. The terms are misprehended as events, and the relation of inclusion is misprehended as that of earlier and later.

(xvii) The misprehensions of the terms and relations of such a series must themselves be pre-maximal terms in another inclusion-series of *r*-states of prehension. This second series may be in the same self or in a different self. When two such inclusion-series are related in this way the former may be called the "time-reflecting" series with respect to the latter; and the latter may be called the "time-projecting" series with respect to the former.

(xviii) Of two terms in an inclusion-series which are both misprehended as temporal, the *more* inclusive will be prehended as *later*.

(xix) If two inclusion-series *S* and *S'* are related as time-projecting and time-reflecting, *every* term in *S* is a state of prehension whose object comprises *every* term in *S'*. Therefore every term in the time-projecting series must be regarded as internally differentiated. Every such term must contain as many factors as there are terms in *S'*, the former being correlated one-to-one with the latter.

(xx) Any pre-maximal term in *S* presents the term which occupies the corresponding position in *S'* as *present*. It presents as *past* all terms in *S'* which are *less* inclusive than this one. And it presents as *future* all terms in *S'* which are *more* inclusive than this one.

(xxi) It follows that the maximal end-term of any inclusion-series is presented as *future* in every prehension in which it is presented as temporal at all.

(xxii) On the other hand, every term in any time-reflecting series is presented as *non-temporal* in that prehension which is the maximal end-term of the correlated time-projecting series. For all such terms are *in fact* non-temporal, and the maximal term of any inclusion-series is a perfectly correct prehension of its object.

(xxiii) That part of the total object of any *ostensible* state of prehension which is discriminated and distinctly prehended is the term which occupies in the time-reflecting series a corresponding position to that which the ostensible state of prehension occupies in the time-projecting series.



(xxiv) The converse of this is not in general true. Two terms may occupy corresponding positions in a time-projecting and a time-reflecting series. Yet the former may not be an *ostensible* state of prehension at all. It may, e.g., appear on introspection as a judgment about the latter term and not as a state of prehending that term.

## CHAPTER XL

### THE COMPLETE CORRECTNESS OF $\omega$ -PREHENSIONS

In the last chapter we stated McTaggart's theory of *C*-series with the minimum of argument and criticism. We have now to consider critically his reasons for holding it.

The test for the theory is logically of the same nature as the test for a general theory of the planetary motions, such as the Ptolemaic, the Copernican, the Keplerian, or the Newtonian. Certain "appearances" have in each case to be "saved". In the one case the "appearances" are the apparent motions of the stars and planets as observed night after night over a period of many years. In the other case the "appearances" are the eleven conditions laid down in Chap. XLVI of *The Nature of Existence* and a twelfth condition which is stated in Chap. XLVIII, §564. The twelve conditions are recapitulated in §565. In the astronomical case we are allowed to use any facts and principles which are already known, e.g., the laws of geometry, the laws of motion, etc. And we must not assume anything in our theory which would conflict with any such facts and principles. Similarly, in the theory of *C*-series we may and must assume any general principles which are relevant and which are self-evident or have been proved. Thus, the Principle of Determining Correspondence, the conclusion that the determining-correspondence relation is that of an  $\omega$ -prehension to its object, the denial of the reality of Time, and so on, are accepted as facts and principles which must be respected and may be used in the development of the theory.

Now, in testing any theory by its ability to "save the appearances", the following points are logically important. (i) The final probability of the theory will depend jointly on (a) its antecedent probability, and (b) its ability to fulfil the

conditions. (ii) The antecedent probability will be greater, *caeteris paribus*, in proportion as the number of logically independent assumptions is less. Now McTaggart's theory of *C*-series, as stated in the last chapter, involves a number of different propositions. It is therefore important to know whether they are logically independent, and therefore have to be the objects of so many different acts of assumption, or whether some of them can be proved from others or from admitted facts and principles. McTaggart thinks that several of them are in the latter position. (iii) Ability to fulfil the conditions must be considered in both a negative and a positive aspect. (a) If a theory entails consequences which are known to be false, it cannot be true as it stands. It need not, indeed, be utterly rejected; but it must be suitably modified. The question would, therefore, arise whether McTaggart's theory of *C*-series does not entail that the temporal and cognitive appearances would be other than they in fact are. E.g., it certainly seems to entail that, *sub specie temporis*, the total object of a self's cogitation throughout the whole of his life is the same, viz., his differentiating group and the parts of its members. And this seems to be contrary to the actual appearances. (b) If a theory complies with all the conditions, its final probability will be greater in proportion as the conditions are more numerous and more determinate, provided that they are logically independent of each other. For then it is less and less likely that any other theory which differs materially from the one in question will satisfy all these conditions. McTaggart considers that this is the strongest point in the evidence for his theory. The twelve conditions are numerous, complicated, and logically independent of each other; and so, if his theory of *C*-series satisfies them all, both negatively and positively, it is likely to be the *only* theory that will do so.

In this and the next few chapters I shall deal with the question why McTaggart accepted certain propositions which form part of his theory of *C*-series. I shall consider why he believed that all  $\omega$ -prehensions are perfectly correct and that all *r*-prehensions present their objects as temporal, and are,

therefore, at least to that extent, incorrect. I shall also consider the nature of the magnitudes which McTaggart ascribed to states of prehension and to residues, respectively; and why he believed that *C*-series are formally analogous to sets of Chinese boxes. After we have discussed these questions we shall consider in detail McTaggart's claim that his theory complies, both positively and negatively, with his twelve conditions. I shall devote the rest of the present chapter to the alleged complete correctness of all  $\omega$ -prehensions.

### The Correctness of $\omega$ -Prehensions.

In Chap. xxxvii of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart claims to prove, quite independently of his theory of Time and *C*-series, that all  $\omega$ -prehensions must be correct in certain respects. We have stated and criticised this argument in Chap. xxxi, Section 2. All that we need do here is to recapitulate the results and to remind the reader that we considered them to be unproved by the argument. The conclusion was that any  $\omega$ -prehension presents its object either as a self or as an  $\omega$ -prehension, as the case may be; and any second-grade  $\omega$ -prehension, such as  $P_{123}^\omega$ , must present its object, i.e.,  $P_{23}$ , as a prehension *in* a certain self (viz.,  $P_2$ ) of a certain self (viz.,  $P_3$ ). McTaggart takes this result as a premise to establish the proposition that every  $\omega$ -prehension is correct, not only in these respects, but in all others. We will now consider his argument.

Let us take the  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{123}^\omega$  as an example. Since  $P_{123}^\omega$  presents its object  $P_{23}$  as a *prehension*, it cannot be erroneous through presenting its object as a material thing or event, or as a sensum, or as some kind of non-prehensive cogitation such as a state of judging or supposing. Moreover,  $P_{123}^\omega$  will present  $P_{23}$  as a prehension whose object is a *self*, and it will be correct in this respect too. So far there is no possibility of error in  $P_{123}^\omega$ , considered as a prehension whose object is  $P_{23}$  as a whole.

But  $P_{23}$  has a series of fragmentary parts  $\Pi_{23}$ , and  $P_{123}^\omega$  is a state of prehension of these parts of  $P_{23}$  as well as being a prehension of  $P_{23}$  as a whole. Now is it not possible that  $P_{123}^\omega$ ,



though a perfectly correct prehension of  $P_{23}$  as a whole, might mispresent some or all of the fragmentary parts of  $P_{23}$ , such as  $P_{23}^r$ ? McTaggart discusses this possibility in §548 of *The Nature of Existence*. His argument is as follows.

It is a general principle, according to him, that, if  $X$  be a prehension of a total object  $Y$ , and  $x$  be a prehension of an object  $y$  which is a part of  $Y$ , then the prehension  $x$  cannot be a part of the prehension  $X$  unless  $X$  presents  $Y$  as containing  $y$ , and  $x$  presents  $y$  as contained in  $Y$ . (This principle was first enunciated in §413 of *The Nature of Existence*, and we have already considered it in Sub-section 1.3 of Chap. xxvi of the present work.) Suppose now that we substitute  $P_{123}^\omega$  for  $X$ ,  $P_{23}$  for  $Y$ , and  $P_{23}^r$  for  $y$ , in the general principle just enunciated. McTaggart assumes, as we have done in Section 7 of Chap. xxxix, that, if  $P_{123}^\omega$  is a state of prehension of the fragmentary part  $P_{23}^r$  as well as of the total object  $P_{23}$ , then it must contain a factor  $P_{123}^{\omega r}$  which is a prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_{23}^r$ . We may therefore substitute this part  $P_{123}^{\omega r}$  for  $x$  in the general principle enunciated above. The argument then runs as follows.

The prehension  $P_{123}^{\omega r}$  is a part of the prehension  $P_{123}^\omega$ ; and  $P_{23}^r$ , the object of the former, is a part of  $P_{23}$ , the object of the latter. Therefore  $P_{123}^\omega$  must present  $P_{23}$  as containing  $P_{23}^r$ , and  $P_{123}^{\omega r}$  must present  $P_{23}^r$  as contained in  $P_{23}$ . But we have already seen that  $P_{123}^\omega$  presents  $P_{23}$  as a prehension in a self of a self. Therefore  $P_{123}^\omega$  will present  $P_{23}^r$  as a part of something which it presents as a prehension in a self of a self. This makes it impossible that  $P_{123}^\omega$  should mispresent  $P_{23}^r$  as a material thing or event, or as any kind of cogitation except a state of prehension; though it does not, perhaps, guarantee that  $P_{123}^\omega$  shall present  $P_{23}^r$  as a state of prehension.

We see then that, if we accept McTaggart's general principle and the further assumption which we have made in Section 7 of Chap. xxxix, and if we admit what he claims to have proved in Chap. xxvii about the correctness in certain respects of  $\omega$ -prehensions, the extent to which an  $\omega$ -prehension could be erroneous is very limited. No  $\omega$ -prehension could mispresent either its object as a whole or any fragmen-

tary part of it as a material thing or event, or as a cogitation which was not a prehension in a self of a self or of an  $\omega$ -prehension. There remains, however, one important kind of error which has not yet been shown to be impossible in an  $\omega$ -prehension. Is it not possible that  $P_{123}^\omega$  should mispresent either  $P_{23}$  as a whole or some of its fragmentary parts, such as  $P_{23}^r$ , as *temporal*? McTaggart discusses this alleged possibility in §§ 549 to 551, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*. The argument is as follows.

(i) It is impossible that  $P_{123}^\omega$  should present any of the fragmentary parts of  $P_{23}$  as temporal whilst not presenting  $P_{23}$  as temporal. For we have seen that  $P_{123}^\omega$  will present the fragmentary parts of  $P_{23}$  as parts of it. Now it is impossible that  $y$  should be prehended as temporal and as a part of  $Y$  whilst  $Y$  is not prehended as temporal. We may conclude then that, if  $P_{123}^\omega$  presents any fragmentary part of  $P_{23}$  as temporal, it will *also* present  $P_{23}$  as temporal.

There are, therefore, only two possibilities of misprehension left to be considered. (a) That  $P_{123}^\omega$  presents *both*  $P_{23}$  and the fragmentary parts of  $P_{23}$  as temporal. Or (b) that  $P_{123}^\omega$  presents  $P_{23}$  as a temporal whole, but does not present any of its fragmentary parts as temporal. The second stage of the argument is to consider these two alternatives in turn.

(iii) (a) According to McTaggart, alternative (a) divides into two sub-alternatives, which we will call ( $\alpha$ ) and ( $\beta$ ). Sub-alternative ( $\alpha$ ) is that  $P_{123}^\omega$  presents  $P_{23}$  as occupying a period of time which is made up by the adjunction of the shorter periods which its fragmentary parts are presented by  $P_{123}^\omega$  as occupying. Sub-alternative ( $\beta$ ) is that  $P_{123}^\omega$  presents some of the fragmentary parts of  $P_{23}$  as occupying periods which fall wholly or partly outside the period which it presents  $P_{23}$  as occupying.

Sub-alternative ( $\beta$ ) may be dismissed at once. It is plainly impossible that one and the same prehension should present two terms  $y$  and  $Y$  as standing in the relation of part to whole and yet as occupying durations which are wholly or partly separate.

The objection to sub-alternative ( $\alpha$ ) is as follows.  $P_{123}^\omega$

presents  $P_{23}$  as a prehension *in* the self  $P_2$  of the self  $P_3$  as a self. But among the fragmentary parts of  $P_{23}$  there may be some, e.g.,  $P_{23}^r$ , which are prehensions in  $P_2$  of  $P_3$  as a material thing or event or as a sensum. Now, if sub-alternative ( $\alpha$ ) were true, this would lead to the following paradox. On the one hand,  $P_{123}^\omega$  would present  $P_{23}$  as a prolonged state of prehension in  $P_2$  of  $P_3$  as a self. On the other hand,  $P_{123}^\omega$  would present  $P_{23}$  as divisible into successive temporally adjoined phases, some of which were prehensions in  $P_2$  of  $P_3$  as a material thing or event or as a sensum. Now it seems impossible that one and the same prehension should present its object *both* as a prolonged state of prehending something as a self *and* as containing phases of prehending the same thing as a bit of matter or as a sensum.

So McTaggart concludes that it is impossible that  $P_{123}^\omega$  should present *both*  $P_{23}$  and its fragmentary parts as temporal. And we have already seen that it is impossible that  $P_{123}^\omega$  should present  $P_{23}$  as non-temporal and its fragmentary parts as temporal. So, under no circumstances can  $P_{123}^\omega$  present the fragmentary parts of  $P_{23}$  as temporal.

(b) There remains, then, only the alternative that  $P_{123}^\omega$  presents  $P_{23}$  as temporal and its fragmentary parts as non-temporal. This can be rejected on the following grounds.  $P_{23}$  is simply the maximal end-term of the inclusion-series  $\Pi_{23}$ . If  $P_{123}^\omega$  presented all the other terms of this series as non-temporal, it could not possibly present the maximal end-term in isolation as temporal. For  $P_{123}^\omega$  cannot present  $P_{23}$  as temporal unless it presents  $P_{23}$  as earlier or later than some of the other terms of the inclusion-series  $\Pi_{23}$ . And it cannot do this if it presents all the other terms in the series as non-temporal.

McTaggart has now rejected all the alternatives which together make up the suggested possibility that  $P_{123}^\omega$  might mispresent either  $P_{23}$  or some of its fragmentary parts as temporal. So the upshot of the discussion is that the  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{123}^\omega$  cannot mispresent either  $P_{23}$  or any of its fragmentary parts as temporal. Plainly, this argument can be extended at once to any  $\omega$ -prehension. And so he has shown that no  $\omega$ -prehension is delusive in any of the ways in which,

according to him, our ordinary prehensions are delusive. He has thus justified the proposition that all  $\omega$ -prehensions are completely correct by straightforward arguments from premises which have nothing to do with his twelve conditions. So this part of his general theory of *C*-series stands on its own feet and is in no need of being indirectly supported by the compliance of the theory with the conditions.

I cannot end this chapter without once more expressing my admiration at McTaggart's power to excogitate and to carry through such an elaborate argument without diagrams and with his own imperfect notation. So far as I can see, the argument is valid; but, for reasons which I have given in their appropriate places in this work, I cannot accept the premises as self-evident or as proven.



## CHAPTER XLI

### THE PARTIAL INCORRECTNESS OF *r*-PREHENSIONS

In this chapter I am going to discuss McTaggart's answers to the following questions, and his reasons for giving these answers. (1) Are there any terms in an inclusion-series, except the maximal end-term, which are perfectly correct prehensions of that common object which is presented by all the terms of the series? The answer is that there are none. (2) Could a pre-maximal term  $P_{12}^r$  in an inclusion-series  $\Pi_{12}$  present *some* of the terms of the series  $\Pi_2$  as temporal and *others* of them as non-temporal? The answer is that it could not. (3) Could *some* pre-maximal terms, e.g.,  $P_{12}^r$ , in an inclusion-series  $\Pi_{12}$  present *all* the terms in  $\Pi_2$  as temporal, whilst *other* terms, e.g.,  $P_{12}^s$ , in  $\Pi_{12}$  present *all* the terms in  $\Pi_2$  as non-temporal? The answer is that this is impossible. (4) Suppose that a self  $P_3$  is prehended by two selves  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ , so that there is in  $P_1$  the inclusion-series  $\Pi_{13}$  and in  $P_2$  the inclusion-series  $\Pi_{23}$ . Is it possible that all the pre-maximal terms in  $\Pi_{13}$  should present all the terms in  $\Pi_3$  as temporal, whilst all the pre-maximal terms in  $\Pi_{23}$  present all the terms in  $\Pi_3$  as non-temporal? The answer is that this is impossible. (5) Would a self which did *not* prehend *itself* contain any misprehensions, or would it prehend correctly everything that it prehended at all? The answer is that it would contain no misprehensions. We will now discuss these five questions in turn.

#### 1. No *r*-Prehension is completely correct.

McTaggart professes to prove this proposition in §§579 and 580 of *The Nature of Existence*. His discussion leads us at once into great difficulties of interpretation, and I am not at all sure that I understand his meaning.

The argument begins at the bottom of p. 248 of Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*. McTaggart starts by reminding us that in fact any two terms of the same inclusion-series have a part in common, since one of them will be contained in, without completely exhausting, the other. The argument then continues so oddly that I had better quote it exactly. "The question then arises whether it is possible that they" (i.e., the terms of an inclusion-series) "should *be* separate prehensions if they *prehended themselves as having* this relation" (i.e., the relation of inclusion) "to the other terms of the series. . . . I think this is not possible. In order to *be* a separate prehension from the others, it" (i.e., any term in an inclusion-series) "would have to appear to itself as *excluding* the others—as having no content in common with them. But in fact. . . it *has* content in common with them. It therefore prehends itself as it is not, in this respect at least. . . . And it is therefore a state of misprehension." (In this quotation the italics are mine. And I have, as usual, substituted "prehend" and "prehension" for "perceive" and "perception".)

In §580 McTaggart points out that the error does not consist in the fact that each prehension in an inclusion-series prehends itself as a separate prehension from all the others. This is not an error, for each *is* in fact a separate prehension from all the others. The argument is that a pre-maximal term in an inclusion-series could not *be* a separate prehension from the other terms (which it in fact *is*) unless it *prehended itself as* having no part in common with the rest. And, in this respect, it misprehends itself; for in fact it has a part in common with every other term in the series, since the relation of the terms in the series is that of a nest of Chinese boxes.

The rest of the argument in §580 is as follows. What are we to say about the maximal end-term of the series? Does not our argument prove too much? We know that it is a perfectly correct prehension. But will not the argument show that, in order to *be* a separate prehension from the rest (which it is) it will have to *prehend itself as* having no part in common with the rest, although really it contains all the

rest? If so, there must be something wrong with the argument; since it will prove the partial incorrectness of a prehension which has already been shown to be completely correct. McTaggart answers that this difficulty does not really arise. The maximal end-term of an inclusion-series does not need to misprehend its relations to the other terms in order to be a separate prehension from all of them. Its separateness from all of them is secured by the fact that *it* is a perfectly correct prehension; whilst *they* are all partially incorrect prehensions, for the reason already given.

I have now stated this extremely difficult and puzzling argument as nearly as possible in McTaggart's own words. Three points strike one at once. (i) It suddenly introduces statements about a prehension "prehending *itself*". This expression is never explained, and it is very hard to interpret it consistently with the rest of McTaggart's statements about prehension. (ii) What is meant by one prehension being "separate" from another? This is never explained. (iii) Even if both these obscurities can be cleared up, it seems plain that McTaggart's argument would not prove what he takes himself to have proved in the rest of his book. I will dispose of the second and third points at once, and will then devote a sub-section to the problem raised by the first.

So far as I can see, "separate", in the present context, simply means "diverse" or "numerically different". It will be noted that McTaggart considers that the separateness of the maximal end-term of an inclusion-series from all the pre-maximal terms is guaranteed directly by the fact that *it* is perfectly correct and *they* are all partially incorrect. Now this does suffice to guarantee that the maximal end-term is "diverse from" or "numerically other than" every partially incorrect prehension, even though it be in the same self and have the same object. And I cannot see that it guarantees "separateness" in any other sense. I think, then, that McTaggart's assertion about the "separateness" of *r*-prehensions, and its necessary conditions, may be interpreted as follows. "There would not *be* a plurality of pre-maximal prehensions in a given self of a common object unless each of

them *prehended itself* as having no part in common with any of the others."

Now this, of course, still remains unintelligible until we know what is meant by a prehension "prehending itself". But I think we can see at once that, whatever interpretation may be put on this phrase, the principle will not prove the conclusion which McTaggart elsewhere assumes as proved. Consider any inclusion-series  $\Pi_{12}$ . All that McTaggart has proved by the present argument, even if it be intelligible and true, is that every pre-maximal term in  $\Pi_{12}$ , such as  $P_{12}^r$ , misrepresents *itself* and its relations to the other terms of *its own* series, such as  $P_{12}^s$ . What he wants to prove, and assumes himself to have proved throughout the rest of his work, is something quite different. It is that every pre-maximal term in  $\Pi_{12}$ , such as  $P_{12}^r$ , misrepresents the terms of the *correlated series*  $\Pi_2$  such as  $P_2^r$ ,  $P_2^s$ , and  $P_2^\omega$ . Obviously this is an entirely different proposition from the former. And no attempt is made to show that the former entails the latter. The only reference that I can find to this point is an assertion in §587, which I will now quote. "...We saw that the terms could not be separate terms unless they prehended themselves as excluding the other terms in their own series. And they could notprehend themselves as having such a relation unless they prehended *their other prehensa*, which are at corresponding points in the common *C-series*, *as also having such a relation*." (The italics are mine, and I have made the usual substitution of "prehend" for "perceive" and "prehensa" for "percepta".)

The second sentence in this quotation is the important one for our present purpose. In it McTaggart asserts, almost in an aside and without the least discussion, that, if  $P_{12}^r$  misrepresents the relation between *itself* and the other terms of *its own series*  $\Pi_{12}$ , it will *ipso facto* misrepresent in the same way the relations between the terms of the *correlated series*  $\Pi_2$ , such as  $P_2^r$ ,  $P_2^s$ , and  $P_2^\omega$ . If this is true, the proposition which he wants to prove does follow from the proposition which he claims to have proved in §579. But surely this step should have been made quite explicit, and have been fully explained



and defended, instead of being introduced in an aside in connexion with another matter in §587.

1.1. *In what Sense can a Prehension "prehend itself"?* We must now see if we can attach any meaning to McTaggart's phrases about a prehension prehending itself and the other terms in its own inclusion-series.

Hitherto we have been told only that each term in an inclusion-series, such as  $\Pi_{12}$ , is a prehension *in* the same self of the same object, and that this common object is presented with complete correctness by the  $\omega$ -prehension which is the maximal end-term of the series. But now it suddenly appears that each such term is a prehension of *itself* and of the other terms in *its own series*, beside being a prehension of this common object which is not a term in its own series.

This novel doctrine applies, not only to  $r$ -prehensions, but also to  $\omega$ -prehensions. For in §580 we find McTaggart talking of an  $\omega$ -prehension, such as  $P_{12}^{\omega}$ , as being a prehension of itself and of the other terms in the inclusion-series of which it is the maximal end-term. Now all this is quite new.  $P_{12}$  was originally defined as that part of the self  $P_1$  which stands to the self  $P_2$  in the determining-correspondence relation of prehension to prehensum. Nothing whatever has been said or hinted until now of its prehending itself or any part of itself.

We cannot ascribe this talk of prehensions prehending themselves either to an oversight in the author or a mistake in the printer. For the phraseology reappears several times in the chapter. In §587, e.g., McTaggart says: "... We saw that the terms" (of an inclusion-series) "could not be separate terms unless they prehended themselves as excluding the other terms in their own series." And in the next sentence he talks of these terms "prehending *their other* prehensa", which clearly implies that each such term is a prehension both of itself and of something else. Lastly, in §589 there is an argument to prove that a self which did notprehend itself would not misprehend anything. I shall deal with this argument on its merits in a later section of the present chapter. Here and now I will remark only that it explicitly refers to the results, supposed to have been established on p. 284,

about prehensions prehending themselves and their relations to other terms in their own series.

Let us now see if we can discover what McTaggart had in mind. The first point is to notice that there is an ambiguity in the phrase " $X$  prehends  $Y$ ", as used by McTaggart. (i) If  $X$  be a *self*, the phrase has the following meaning. "There is a part  $x$  of  $X$ , such that  $x$  is a prehension whose object is  $Y$ ." In this sense, we can talk of  $X$  prehending  $X$ , provided that  $X$  is a self. And McTaggart has assumed that many, though not all selves, doprehend themselves in this sense. E.g., the kind of part symbolised by  $P_{11}$  is that part of the self  $P_1$  which stands to  $P_1$  in the relation of prehension to prehensum. (ii) McTaggart also constantly uses the phrase " $X$  prehends  $Y$ " (of course he says "perceives" instead of "prehends") when  $X$  is not a self but is a *prehension*. He then means by it " $X$  is a prehension of which  $Y$  is the prehensum." Thus he would say that  $P_{12}$  perceives  $P_2$ , meaning simply that  $P_{12}$  is a prehension of which  $P_2$  is the object. I think that this is an objectionable phraseology, and I have always substituted for it the phrase " $X$  presents  $Y$ ".

Now, up to this point in the book, these are the only two senses in which McTaggart has used the phrase " $X$  prehends  $Y$ " (or rather " $X$  perceives  $Y$ "). But now we have to deal with a third use of the phrase, in which (a)  $X$  is to be a *prehension*, and not a self, whilst (b)  $Y$  may be *identical with*  $X$ . The question then is: "What can be meant by the phrase ' $X$  prehends  $X$ ' when  $X$  is not a self but is a prehension?"

I do not think that it could possibly mean that  $X$  stands to itself in the relation of prehension to prehended object. If McTaggart had meant this, he would surely have realised that he was suddenly introducing a new and very doubtful conception, and he would have tried to defend it against probable objections. Evidently he did not think that he was suddenly introducing in §579 something new and startling.

Can we interpret the phrase " $X$  prehends  $X$ ", where  $X$  is a *prehension*, by analogy with the known meaning of the phrase where  $X$  is a *self*? In some cases we certainly could. It would have to mean that the prehension  $X$  contains a part

which is a prehension whose object is  $X$  itself. Now we know that McTaggart holds that prehensions have parts, and that a part of a prehension can be itself a prehension. We know also that he holds that a prehension can have a part which stands to the whole in the relation of prehension to prehensum. Now suppose that  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  are two selves which form a self-differentiating group. Then the first-grade secondary parts of  $P_1$  are  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{12}$ , i.e.,  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of himself and  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_2$ . Now consider  $P_{11}$ . This has a set of second-grade secondary parts  $P_{111}$  and  $P_{112}$ . Of these  $P_{111}$  is  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_{11}$ , whilst  $P_{112}$  is  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_{12}$ . Consider now  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{111}$ . Here we have an  $\omega$ -prehension, viz.,  $P^\omega$ , which has a part, viz.,  $P_{111}^\omega$ , which stands to the whole in the relation of prehension to prehensum. For  $P_{111}^\omega$  is (a) a part of  $P_{11}^\omega$ , and is (b) a prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_{11}^\omega$ . Therefore McTaggart could consistently say "The prehension  $P_{11}^\omega$  prehends itself" in a sense analogous to that in which he certainly does say "The self  $P_1$  prehends itself."

The same remarks can be applied at once to any of the pre-maximal terms in the series  $\Pi_{11}$ , such as  $P_{11}^r$ . For  $P_{11}^r$  contains a part  $P_{111}^r$  which is a prehension in  $P_1$  of all the terms in the series  $\Pi_{11}$ . Therefore  $P_{11}^r$  contains a part which is a prehension, *inter alia*, of  $P_{11}^r$ . So McTaggart could consistently say "The  $r$ -prehension  $P_{11}^r$  prehends itself" in a sense analogous to that in which he certainly does say "The self  $P_1$  prehends itself."

Moreover, he could say, in the same sense, of any term in the series  $\Pi_{11}$  that it prehends, not only itself, but every other term in its own series. Take, e.g., the term  $P_{11}^r$ . The part  $P_{111}^r$  of this is a prehension, not only of the corresponding term  $P_{11}^r$ , but also of every term from  $P_{11}^1$  to  $P_{11}^\omega$  in the series  $\Pi_{11}$ . So, in the sense which we are considering, McTaggart could consistently say that every pre-maximal term in the series  $\Pi_{11}$  prehends, not only itself, but every other term in its own series. And he could also say this of the maximal end-term  $P_{11}^\omega$ .

A precisely similar interpretation could be put on such

statements, as applied to any *purely reflexive* state of prehension, i.e., to any term in any inclusion-series such as  $\Pi_{11}$ ,  $\Pi_{111}$ ,  $\Pi_{1111}$ , etc. E.g.,  $P_{111}^r$  will have a part  $P_{1111}^r$  which is a prehension in  $P_1$  of all the terms in the series  $\Pi_{111}$ . Therefore we can say, in the sense defined above, that  $P_{111}^r$  prehends itself and all the other terms in its own inclusion-series.

Again, a similar interpretation could be put upon such statements, as applied to the terms of *primary* inclusion-series, such as  $\Pi_1$ , if the account of such series which I suggested in Section 6 of Chap. xxxix of the present work be correct. I will now explain this statement. Consider the term  $P_1^r$  in the series  $\Pi_1$ . This is a total state of prehension composed of the two parts  $P_{11}^r$  and  $P_{12}^r$ . Its object is  $P_1$ 's differentiating group ( $P_1, P_2$ ) taken as a whole. Now  $P_{11}^r$  is a state of prehension in  $P_1$  of the whole series  $\Pi_1$ . Therefore it is, *inter alia*, a state of prehension in  $P_1$  of the term  $P_1^r$  in that series. So  $P_1^r$  contains a part which is a prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_1^r$ . Thus McTaggart could consistently say, in the sense which we have defined, that  $P_1^r$  prehends itself. Generalising this, he could say of every term in the primary series  $\Pi_1$  that it prehends itself and every other term in its own series.

It should be noticed that the interpretation which I have suggested for the statement that  $X$  prehends  $X$ , where  $X$  is a prehension and not a self, presupposes that the self in which  $X$  occurs has *reflexive self-prehension*. For it presupposes that there are in  $P_1$  purely reflexive prehensions, such as  $P_{11}$ ,  $P_{111}$ , etc. If  $P_1$  were not a member of its own differentiating group, this condition would break down, and no such meaning as I have suggested could be attached to any statement of the form "This prehension in  $P_1$  prehends itself and the other terms of its own inclusion-series." Now McTaggart himself asserts that this condition is necessary; and this in some measure encourages me to think that my interpretation is on the right lines. The relevant passages occur in §589 of *The Nature of Existence*, where McTaggart is trying to prove that there could be no misprehensions in a self which did notprehend itself. An essential premise in his argument is that the fragmentary parts of a self which does notprehend



itself cannotprehend themselves and their relations to each other.

Nevertheless, I am quite sure that I have not completely grasped what McTaggart means by a prehension prehending itself and the other terms in its own inclusion-series. My reason for holding this depressing conviction is the following. On McTaggart's view it would be sensible to say that a *completely non-reflexive* state of prehension, such as  $P_{12}^r$ , or a *not completely reflexive* state of prehension, such as  $P_{112}^r$ , prehends itself and the other terms in its own inclusion-series, provided only that the self  $P_1$  prehends itself. Now it is easy to show that, on my interpretation, such statements would be meaningless even though the self  $P_1$  prehended itself. This I will now do.

Consider, e.g., the completely non-reflexive prehension  $P_{12}^r$ , i.e., a pre-maximal prehension in the self  $P_1$  of the self  $P_2$ . Suppose that  $P_1$  doesprehend itself, i.e., that it contains the  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{11}$ . Then it is, no doubt, true that  $P_1$  contains a part, viz.,  $P_{112}^r$ , which corresponds in serial position to  $P_{12}^r$  and is a prehension of  $P_{12}^r$  *inter alia*. But, unfortunately,  $P_{112}^r$  is *not* a part of  $P_{12}^r$ , as, e.g.,  $P_{111}^r$  is a part of  $P_{11}^r$ . On the contrary,  $P_{112}^r$  is a part of  $P_{11}^r$ . Therefore we cannot say that  $P_{12}^r$  contains a part which is a prehension whose object is  $P_{12}^r$  itself. And so we cannot say, on my interpretation of the phrase, that  $P_{12}^r$  prehends itself and the other members of its own series.

Consider, again, the partly but not completely reflexive prehension  $P_{112}^r$ , i.e., a pre-maximal prehension in  $P_1$  of his own prehension of  $P_2$ . If  $P_1$  prehends himself, he will have a prehension  $P_{1112}^r$  which corresponds in serial position to  $P_{112}^r$  and is a prehension of  $P_{112}^r$  *inter alia*. But  $P_{1112}^r$  is *not* a part of  $P_{112}^r$ ; it is a part of  $P_{111}^r$ . Therefore, as before, we cannot say, on my interpretation of the phrase, that  $P_{112}^r$  prehends itself and the other terms of its series.

To sum up. My interpretation gives a meaning, which is consistent with McTaggart's general usage, to the statement that  $X$  is a prehension of itself and of other terms of its own series, if and *only if*  $X$  is either a term of a *primary* inclusion-

series, such as  $\Pi_1$ , or of a *purely reflexive* secondary inclusion-series, such as  $\Pi_{11}$ ,  $\Pi_{111}$ , etc. But it is plain that McTaggart requires that the phrase should have a meaning and express a fact when  $X$  is a term of a *secondary* inclusion-series, which is either *purely non-reflexive*, like  $\Pi_{12}$ , or *not purely reflexive*, like  $\Pi_{112}$ .

Can we suggest any other meaning for the phrase? The only other one that I can think of seems fantastic. When McTaggart said that the terms of an inclusion-series could not *be* so many different states of prehension unless *each of them* misprehended *itself and the others* as mutually exclusive, can he have meant no more than what follows? Can he have meant that the terms of an inclusion-series could not *be* so many different states of prehension unless *the self* in which they all exist misprehends *each of them* as excluding all the others?

Fantastic as this suggestion may be, let us consider some of its consequences. (i) It would follow at once that no self which does notprehend itself can contain any inclusion-series of  $r$ -states of prehension. For it would contain no *reflexive*  $\omega$ -prehensions such as  $P_{11}$ ,  $P_{111}$ ,  $P_{112}$ , etc. All its  $\omega$ -prehensions would be purely non-reflexive, such as  $P_{12}$ ,  $P_{121}$ ,  $P_{122}$ , etc. Since it would notprehend any of its states, it could not misprehend, as mutually exclusive, any two of its states which in fact stand in the inclusion-relation to each other. Therefore, on the present interpretation of McTaggart's principle, there could not *be* in such a self a series of states of prehension related by the inclusion-relation. Now McTaggart certainly does accept this conclusion, and the argument by which he professes to establish it in §589 looks very much like the argument which I have just used.

(ii) Let us now suppose that  $P_1$  doesprehend itself and therefore does contain reflexive  $\omega$ -prehensions. Then it follows from McTaggart's principle, as now interpreted, that all  $P_1$ 's pre-maximal *reflexive* prehensions, whether pure or mixed, are partly erroneous. (The reader should notice that any prehension in  $P_1$  whose symbol is of the form  $P_{11\dots}$  will be reflexive. If the suffixes are all 1's, it will be purely reflexive.

If, after the second 1, there occurs at any stage any other number, it will be not purely reflexive.) I will now prove that  $P_{11}^r$  and  $P_{112}^r$  will be erroneous; and it will easily be seen that the proof can be extended to any reflexive state of prehension in  $P_1$ .

(a) Consider  $P_{11}^r$ . The terms  $P_1^1, P_1^2, \dots P_1^r, \dots P_1^\omega$ , which constitute the series  $\Pi_1$ , are *in fact* so many distinct total states of prehension in the self  $P_1$  of its differentiating group taken as a single total object. And these terms do *in fact* stand to each other in the inclusion-relation, and are *not* mutually exclusive. Now, according to McTaggart's principle, as we are now interpreting it, these terms could not *be* so many different states of prehension in  $P_1$  of their common object, unless  $P_1$  misprehended them as mutually exclusive. But the prehensions in  $P_1$  of the terms of  $\Pi_1$  are, of course, the terms of  $\Pi_{11}$ , i.e., they are terms of the form  $P_{11}^r$ . Therefore all the pre-maximal terms of  $\Pi_{11}$ , such as  $P_{11}^r$ , must be erroneous, at least to the extent of presenting the terms of  $\Pi_1$  as mutually exclusive.

(b) Now consider  $P_{112}^r$ . The terms  $P_{12}^1, P_{12}^2, \dots P_{12}^r, \dots P_{12}^\omega$ , which constitute the series  $\Pi_{12}$ , are *in fact* so many distinct total states of prehension in the self  $P_1$  of the self  $P_2$ . And these terms do *in fact* stand to each other in the inclusion-relation, and are *not* mutually exclusive. According to McTaggart's principle, as we are now interpreting it, these terms could not *be* so many different states of prehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$  unless  $P_1$  misprehended them as mutually exclusive. But the prehensions in  $P_1$  of the terms of  $\Pi_{12}$  are, of course, the terms of  $\Pi_{112}$ , i.e., they are terms of the form  $P_{112}^r$ . Therefore all the pre-maximal terms of  $\Pi_{112}$ , such as  $P_{112}^r$ , must be erroneous, at least to the extent of presenting the terms of  $\Pi_{12}$  as mutually exclusive.

(iii) We have now seen that it follows from McTaggart's principle, as at present interpreted, that all  $P_1$ 's pre-maximal *reflexive* prehensions, whether pure or mixed, are partly erroneous. What are we to say about  $P_1$ 's *non-reflexive* prehensions, such as  $P_{12}^r, P_{121}^r, P_{122}^r$ , etc.? It certainly does not follow from the principle, as now interpreted, that these must be partly erroneous. This I will now show.

Consider, e.g.,  $P_{12}^r$ . The terms  $P_2^1, P_2^2, \dots P_2^r, \dots P_2^\omega$  are, no doubt, *in fact* so many different total states of prehension in  $P_2$  of  $P_2$ 's differentiating group taken as a single total object. They do, *in fact*, stand in the inclusion-relation, and are *not* mutually exclusive. But, even if we accept McTaggart's principle, this does not require that they shall be misprehended as mutually exclusive by the *foreign self*  $P_1$ . It requires only that they shall be thus misprehended by the self  $P_2$  to which they belong. Thus we cannot prove that  $P_{12}^r$  must be erroneous in the way in which  $P_{11}^r$  and  $P_{112}^r$  must be so if McTaggart's principle be accepted.

(iv) I have already quoted a passage from §587 in which McTaggart suddenly asserts, without any argument, that the terms of an inclusion-series could notprehend *themselves* as excluding the other terms in *their own* series "unless they prehended their other prehensa, which are at corresponding points in the common *C*-series, as also having such a relation". I pointed out that, if this were granted, he might be able to reach the conclusion which he wants, viz., that every pre-maximal term in any inclusion-series misrepresents, not only *itself* and the other terms in *its own* series, but also the *different* series which is time-reflecting with respect to it as time-projecting.

Let us now see if we can make anything of the *obiter dictum*, just quoted from §587; and whether it will enable us, in combination with the interpretation which we are putting on McTaggart's general principle, to reach the conclusion that non-reflexive pre-maximal states of prehension, such as  $P_{12}^r$ , must to some extent misrepresent their objects, viz., the series  $\Pi_2$ .

I will begin by putting the matter in temporal terms, for I think that this will show us the empirical facts which were at the back of McTaggart's mind. Suppose that, at any stage in my history, I introspect and retrospect. Then it appears to me that the whole course of my history falls into a series of successive mutually exclusive total phases. Now suppose that I have also been prehending a certain foreign object throughout my history. Then I shall inevitably regard the whole



history of this object as *also* falling into a series of successive mutually exclusive total phases. In each different successive phase of *my* history I prehended as present a different phase in the history of this foreign object. We must now consider the non-temporal facts which underlie these temporal appearances.

Suppose that the prehending self is  $P_1$ , and that the prehended foreign object is another self  $P_2$ . Then what appears to  $P_1$  as a series of successive mutually exclusive total phases in the history of  $P_2$  is in fact the inclusion-series  $\Pi_2$ . What appears to  $P_1$  as a series of successive mutually exclusive total phases in his own history is in fact the inclusion-series  $\Pi_1$ . When we say that  $P_1$  continues throughout the whole of his history toprehend  $P_2$  the fact is that every term  $P_1^r$  in  $\Pi_1$  contains a part  $P_{12}^r$  which is a state of prehension in  $P_1$  of the whole series  $\Pi_2$ . Now in  $\Pi_2$  there is one and only one term, viz.,  $P_2^r$ , which occupies a corresponding position to that which  $P_{12}^r$  occupies in  $\Pi_{12}$ . So  $P_{12}^r$  will be a state of prehension in  $P_1$  which presents  $P_2^r$  as the *present* phase in  $P_2$ 's history, and presents all the other terms of  $\Pi_2$  as past or future phases. If we take any other term  $P_1^s$  of  $\Pi_1$ , this will contain a part  $P_{12}^s$  which is a state of prehension in  $P_1$  of the series  $\Pi_2$ . But  $P_{12}^s$  will present  $P_2^s$  as the present phase in  $P_2$ 's history, and it will present all the other terms in  $\Pi_2$ , such as  $P_2^r$ , as either past or future.

Now the interpretation which I put on the passage quoted above is the following. It is inconceivable that the terms of  $\Pi_{12}$ , such as  $P_{12}^r$ , should present the terms of  $\Pi_2$  as *not* mutually exclusive, if the terms of  $\Pi_{11}$ , such as  $P_{11}^r$ , present the terms of  $\Pi_1$  as mutually exclusive. I suppose that the reason for holding this would be as follows.  $P_{11}^r$  and  $P_{12}^r$  correspond in *position* in the *C*-dimension; they correspond in *grade* in the determining-correspondence dimension; they are states of prehension in the *same self*  $P_1$ ; and their objects are of the same nature, viz., the primary inclusion-series  $\Pi_1$  and  $\Pi_2$ , respectively. The only difference is that one is reflexive and the other is not. So, if the terms of *one* of them mispresent in a certain systematic way the nature of the

relations between the terms in the series which is its object, then it is almost certain that the terms of the other will have the same systematic defect.

If this is what McTaggart means, and if these are his reasons for believing it, the proposition is intelligible and fairly plausible. The question "How plausible?" will depend for its answer on how much weight we attach to the difference between being reflexive and being non-reflexive, in this connexion.

It remains to combine my interpretation of this passage with my interpretation of the statement that each term in an inclusion-series mustprehend itself and the other terms of its own series as mutually exclusive. The result is as follows. The terms of  $\Pi_1$  would not *be* so many different states of prehension (which they *are*) unless  $P_1$  misprehended them as being mutually exclusive (which they are *not*). Therefore every pre-maximal term, such as  $P_{11}^r$ , of the *reflexive* series  $\Pi_{11}$  misrepresents the terms of  $\Pi_1$  as mutually exclusive. Therefore every pre-maximal term, such as  $P_{12}^r$ , of the *non-reflexive* series  $\Pi_{12}$  must misrepresent the terms of  $\Pi_2$  as mutually exclusive.

We see then that, if we combine my interpretation of McTaggart's general principle with my interpretation of his *obiter dictum* in the passage quoted from §587, we reach the conclusion that *non-reflexive* pre-maximal terms, like  $P_{12}^r$ , misrepresent the series, such as  $\Pi_2$ , which are their objects.

(v) I called my interpretation of McTaggart's general principle "fantastic" when I first introduced it, for the following reason. It seems hardly credible that he should have talked of each term in an inclusion-series as prehending *itself* and the other members of *its own* series, if he had meant that they are all presented to the self which owns them by a prehension of a *different grade*, which is not a member of their series at all. Fantastic as it is, it remains the best suggestion that I can offer. But, even if it be the right interpretation of McTaggart's premise, I cannot see the least reason to accept the premise as thus interpreted.

I conclude that McTaggart has produced no intelligible

argument in support of his conclusion that all  $r$ -prehensions partly mispresent their objects. I cannot say that the argument is fallacious, for I do not understand the sentence which expresses its main premise. But, with every interpretation which I can suggest, the premise is doubtful and the conclusion does not follow from it alone. It needs to be supplemented by another premise, which appears to be thrown out incidentally as a mere *obiter dictum* in §587 in connexion with another topic. I have tried to interpret this other premise, and I have asserted that, when so interpreted, it is plausible but not certain. Henceforth, then, I must regard the proposition that all  $r$ -prehensions are partly incorrect simply as an independent postulate, forming part of the general theory of  $C$ -series, and only to be established indirectly through the ability of that theory to "save the appearances".

## 2. The second Question about $r$ -Prehensions.

The question to be discussed here is the following. Could a pre-maximal term in an inclusion-series  $\Pi_{12}$  present *some* of the terms in the series  $\Pi_2$  as temporal and *others* of them as non-temporal? McTaggart discusses this question, and answers it in the negative, in §§581 and 582 of *The Nature of Existence*. His argument is as follows.

The kind and degree of error attaching to any state of prehension  $P_{12}^r$  in the series  $\Pi_{12}$  depends simply on the position of this term in this series. Now in the series  $\Pi_2$ , which is the object of  $P_{12}^r$ , there is one and the same relation between any two terms, e.g.,  $P_2^u$  and  $P_2^v$ , viz., that of inclusion. It seems incredible that this one relation should be presented by one and the same state of prehension  $P_{12}^r$  as a temporal relation between some of the terms of  $\Pi_2$  and as a non-temporal relation between others of them. This argument seems to me to be highly plausible.

It will be worth while to consider what this conclusion comes to when stated *sub specie temporis*. It comes to this. If, at a certain stage in the course of his history, the self  $P_1$  prehends *any* term  $P_2^r$  in the series  $\Pi_2$  as a total phase in the history of the self  $P_2$ , he will at that stageprehend *every* term

in the series  $\Pi_2$  as a total phase in the history of  $P_2$ . He will, therefore, at that stage in his history, prehend the series  $\Pi_2$  as a series of adjoined successive total phases which together make up the whole history of  $P_2$ . The term  $P_2^\omega$ , which he then prehends as the final phase in  $P_2$ 's history, is in fact identical with  $P_2$  itself as a timeless two-dimensional individual.

It also follows, *sub specie temporis*, that, whenever  $P_1$  prehends the series  $\Pi_2$  as the history of  $P_2$ , he will prehend as *future* that term in  $\Pi_2$  which is in fact  $P_2$  itself as a timeless two-dimensional individual. For the term which is in fact  $P_2$  as a timeless two-dimensional individual is the maximal end-term  $P_2^\omega$  of the series  $\Pi_2$ . And  $\Pi_2$  is presented as a temporal series only by pre-maximal terms of  $\Pi_{12}$ , such as  $P_{12}^r$ . Now a pre-maximal term  $P_{12}^r$  presents as future any term in  $\Pi_2$  which is more inclusive than the term  $P_2^r$  which corresponds in position to  $P_{12}^r$ .

### 3. The third and fourth Questions about *r*-Prehensions.

The questions now to be discussed are the following. (a) Could *some* pre-maximal terms, e.g.,  $P_{12}^r$ , in an inclusion-series  $\Pi_{12}$  present *all* the terms in  $\Pi_2$  as temporal, whilst *others* in the same series, such as  $P_{12}^s$ , present *all* the terms in  $\Pi_2$  as non-temporal? (b) Suppose that a self  $P_3$  is prehended by two selves  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ . Is it possible that all the pre-maximal terms in  $\Pi_{13}$  should present all the terms in  $\Pi_3$  as temporal, whilst all the pre-maximal terms in  $\Pi_{23}$  present all the terms in  $\Pi_3$  as non-temporal? McTaggart discusses these two questions together in §§585 to 588, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*, and reaches a negative answer to both of them.

If it could be shown to be impossible for a self to misprehend an inclusion-series except as a temporal series, a negative answer could be given at once to both questions. But McTaggart does not profess to be able to prove this.

Failing this, he argues as follows. Any relation which the terms of an inclusion-series could be misprehended as having to each other would have to fulfil the following conditions. It



would have to be such as to make them *appear* to be mutually exclusive, though they are in fact related like the members of a set of Chinese boxes; it would have to be asymmetrical and transitive and to generate a one-dimensional series, or it would differ too fundamentally in its formal properties from the real generating relation of the series; and it would have to allow of that kind of correlation between different inclusion-series which enables us to talk of corresponding positions in such series. Now we know that the temporal relation of earlier and later answers to these conditions; and the conditions are so stringent that we cannot think of any other relation which would answer to them all. Therefore, although a negative answer to our two questions cannot be rigidly proved, we must say that we can see no way in which they could be answered in the affirmative.

Before leaving this topic it may be worth while to consider what the negative answer to the first of these questions amounts to *sub specie temporis*. It would come to this. It is most improbable, if not absolutely impossible, that a self  $P_1$  should at certain stages of his historyprehend the terms of  $\Pi_2$  as a series of successive total phases which together make up the history of  $P_2$ , and at other stages in his historyprehend  $\Pi_2$  as a non-temporal series of mutually exclusive terms.

#### 4. Misprehension requires Reflexive Self-prehension.

In §589 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart claims to prove that a self which did notprehend *itself* could not misprehend anything.

As we know, McTaggart holds that it is not necessary for a self toprehend itself, though we cannot tell whether there are any selves which lack reflexive self-prehension. E.g., the differentiating group of  $P_1$  might not contain  $P_1$  itself, but might consist of  $P_2$  and  $P_3$  which form a self-differentiating group. In that case the first-grade secondary parts of  $P_1$  would be  $P_{12}$  and  $P_{13}$ . Its second-grade secondary parts would be  $P_{122}$ ,  $P_{123}$ ,  $P_{132}$ , and  $P_{133}$ . And so on.  $P_1$  would contain no prehension of itself or of any of its own prehensions. McTaggart asserts that such a self as  $P_1$  could contain

no misprehensions whatever. The reason which he gives is as follows.

If  $P_1$  did contain any misprehensions, they would have to be fragmentary parts of  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehensions. But, he says, "fragmentary parts can be prehensions only if they misprehend the relations in which they stand to each other". Now "a self which is not self-conscious can contain no prehensions of his own states and consequently no misprehensions of them".

The argument, then, comes to this. The only parts of a self which could be misprehensions are the fragmentary parts of his  $\omega$ -prehensions. But a fragmentary part of an  $\omega$ -prehension cannot be a prehension of anything unless it is *inter alia* a misprehension of itself and its relations to other terms in its own series. Now, in a self which did not prehend itself, no fragmentary part of any  $\omega$ -prehension could prehend itself. Therefore, in such a self, no fragmentary part of any  $\omega$ -prehension could *misprehend* itself. Therefore, in such a self, no fragmentary part could be a prehension of anything. But nothing in a self except a fragmentary part can be a misprehension. Therefore such a self could contain no misprehensions. Its only prehensions are its  $\omega$ -prehensions, and these are all perfectly correct.

I do not think that anyone could say that this argument, as it stands, is intelligible. It remains to be seen whether we can make sense of it by interpreting McTaggart's statements about prehensions prehending themselves and the other terms in their own series in the way suggested in Sub-section 1.1, p. 407 of the present chapter.

Suppose that  $P_1$  does not prehend itself. Then it will contain no such  $\omega$ -prehension as would be symbolised by  $P_{11}$ . Therefore it will contain no fragmentary parts which could be symbolised by  $P_{11}^r$ . Therefore, if there were a series  $\Pi_1$  of terms  $P_1^1, P_1^2, \dots, P_1^r, \dots, P_1^\omega$  in  $P_1$ , it is impossible that  $P_1$  should prehend them at all. It is therefore impossible that  $P_1$  should prehend them as excluding each other. But, according to McTaggart's principle as interpreted by me, these terms could not *be* so many different prehensions in  $P_1$  of a common

object (in this case  $P_1$ 's differentiating group taken as a whole) unless  $P_1$  did misprehend them as mutually exclusive. Therefore there cannot be in  $P_1$  any such series of terms as  $P_1^1, P_1^2, \dots P_1^r, \dots P_1^\omega$ . There is just the last term  $P_1$ , which has no right to the index  $\omega$  because this indicates its place at the end of a series which, in this case, does not exist. Now any erroneous prehension in  $P_1$  would have to be either one of the terms  $P_1^r$  as a whole or some part of it in the determining-correspondence dimension, such as  $P_{12}^r$ . Since there are no such terms in  $P_1$  as  $P_1^r$ , it follows that  $P_1$  can contain no misprehensions of anything. All its prehensions are  $\omega$ -prehensions, and therefore completely correct.

So far as I can see, this argument is valid. And it leads to the conclusion which McTaggart claims to prove. So my "fantastic" interpretation of his fundamental principle about prehensions prehending themselves and the other terms in their own series has once again worked. I am therefore encouraged to think that, in spite of its oddity, it may be the right interpretation.

It is evident that McTaggart's argumentation on all the topics which have been treated in this chapter is extraordinarily obscure and very badly expressed. I cannot explain how an author, who is generally so clear and so careful to explain the meanings of his terms, came to nod in this singular way at a very important point in his argument.

## CHAPTER XLII

### THE EXISTENCE AND NATURE OF THE *C*-DIMENSION

In this chapter I propose to discuss three closely connected subjects, viz., (1) McTaggart's reasons for postulating a second dimension for selves and  $\omega$ -prehensions; (2) his reasons for thinking that the relation which we misperhend as that of earlier and later is really that of being included and including; and (3) his reasons for ascribing intensive magnitude to  $r$ -prehensions and extensive magnitude to residues, as he does. I will take these three subjects in turn.

#### 1. Grounds for postulating a *C*-dimension.

Why should McTaggart think it necessary to suppose that selves and  $\omega$ -prehensions are divided in another dimension, beside the determining-correspondence dimension in which they are admittedly divided into parts within parts without end? In §§ 537 to 539, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence* he raises the question whether the terms of a *C*-series in a self might not just be some or all of that self's  $\omega$ -prehensions. If this were possible, there would be no need to postulate any second dimension. McTaggart decides, however, that it is not possible.

The suggestion may be put most simply as follows. Let  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  be two selves which form a self-differentiating group.  $P_1$  will have a set of two first-grade secondary parts, viz.,  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{12}$ .  $P_{11}$  is  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of himself, and  $P_{12}$  is his  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_2$ . Now it might be suggested that each of these constitutes a different finite stretch of  $P_1$ 's *C*-series, and that together they exactly make up, without overlap or omission, the whole length of  $P_1$ 's *C*-series. Now  $P_{11}$  in turn has a set of two second-grade secondary parts, viz.,  $P_{111}$  and  $P_{112}$ . These are respectively  $P_1$ 's  $\omega$ -prehension of  $P_{11}$  and his



$\omega$ -prehension of  $P_{12}$ . If we suppose that  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{12}$  are two adjoined stretches which together exactly make up the total length of  $P_1$ 's  $C$ -series, it might reasonably be suggested that  $P_{111}$  and  $P_{112}$  are two shorter stretches which together exactly make up the longer stretch  $P_{11}$ . The same suggestion could then be extended to every term of every grade in  $P_1$ 's determining-correspondence system.

We have not yet, however, introduced any kind of *order*. We know, e.g., that  $P_{111}$ ,  $P_{112}$ ,  $P_{121}$ , and  $P_{122}$  exactly make up  $P_1$  without omission or overlapping. But the Principle of Determining Correspondence tells us nothing about their relative order, if they have any. But stretches which by adjunction make up a longer stretch of a  $C$ -series plainly must be adjoined in some definite order. We must be able to say that a certain stretch is *between* a certain pair of stretches, and so on. This, however, could be managed on the present theory. We might suppose that there is some asymmetrical relation between  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ ; e.g.,  $P_1$  might be happier than  $P_2$ . Now suppose that we had the following rule. "Any two secondary parts of the same grade which agree except for their final determinant are adjoined to each other. And the one whose final determinant is the happier of the two selves is prehended as earlier than the one whose final determinant is the less happy self." We should then have the terms arranged in an order. Thus, at the first grade,  $P_{11}$  would be adjoined to  $P_{12}$  and would be prehended as earlier than  $P_{12}$ . At the second grade  $P_{111}$  would be adjoined to  $P_{112}$ , and would be prehended as earlier than it. Similarly  $P_{121}$  would be adjoined to  $P_{122}$ , and would be prehended as earlier than it. So the four second-grade parts  $P_{111}$ ,  $P_{112}$ ,  $P_{121}$ , and  $P_{122}$  would be adjoined in that order.

The fatal objection to this attempt to dispense with anything but  $\omega$ -prehensions is that it conflicts with Condition VII in Chap. xxxviii of the present work. It is of the very essence of determining correspondence that any symbol that occurs in the representation of a determining-correspondence hierarchy stands for *one and only one* term. So, if the relation of determining correspondence be that of an  $\omega$ -prehension to

its prehensum, it is plain that a given self  $P_1$  cannot have more than one  $\omega$ -prehension of a given object. For, otherwise, we should have a symbol of the form  $P_{1x}$  symbolising more than one determining-correspondence part of  $P_1$ . Now Condition VII states the obvious fact that a given self can, *sub specie temporis*, cogitate precisely the same object on several different occasions which are separated by intervals during which he was not ostensibly cogitating this object. Now all these experiences of cogitating the same object must, on McTaggart's view, really be states of prehending one and the same prehensum. Now either there really are two different states of prehending this prehensum, or there are not. If there are, it is impossible that more than one of them should be an  $\omega$ -prehension; since a self cannot have more than one such prehension of a given object. If there are not, we should have to hold that a single term in a *C*-series can appear to occupy several different and separated temporal positions when the *C*-series is misprehended as a *B*-series. This would break down the correlation between the real *C*-series and the ostensible *B*-series to such an extent that the former could provide no explanation of the appearance of the latter.

I think that this argument can be reinforced by two other considerations. (i) All our ordinary experience seems, when we introspect it, to be extremely unlike  $\omega$ -prehensions as described by McTaggart. Either introspection is, in this respect, veridical or it is delusive. If it is veridical, our ordinary experiences really do differ from  $\omega$ -prehensions, and we must find some dimension of ourselves in which to put them. If, on the other hand, introspection is in this respect delusive, then the delusive states of introspective prehension, at any rate, must differ from  $\omega$ -prehensions. And so, once more we must find some dimension of ourselves in which to put them.

(ii) The most ordinary reflexion on our own ostensible histories strongly suggests that two dimensions at least are needed to account for the facts. For, on the one hand, there is the factor of the "breadth" or "extent" of the field of consciousness at any moment; and, on the other, there is the duration of the history which is composed of adjoined

successive total states of consciousness. Now division in the determining-correspondence dimension obviously corresponds to differentiation of the total object of consciousness at any moment. And "breadth" of the field of consciousness at any moment obviously corresponds to the number of primary parts in a self's differentiating group. So the determining-correspondence dimension seems to be used up in accounting for this factor in our ostensible mental histories. It seems, therefore, fairly plain that another dimension must be postulated to deal with the factor of ostensible duration and succession of total states in our mental history.

## 2. The Inclusion-Relation.

Why did McTaggart hold that the generating relations of those series which we misprehend as series of successive events is that of being included in without exhausting? The idea is by no means an obvious one, since, as he admits and asserts, the terms appear, when prehended as events, to be *wholly outside* each other.

In §535 McTaggart points out that the generating relation of a *C*-series quite certainly cannot be a relation of causal determination, in his sense of the word. For we have seen that the latter relation may be reciprocal; whilst the former must be asymmetrical, since it is prehended as the asymmetrical relation of earlier and later. We have also seen that, even when a relation of causal determination relates *A* to *B* and not *B* to *A*, it will in some cases run from the term which is prehended as earlier to that which is prehended as later, and in other cases will run from the term which is prehended as later to that which is prehended as earlier. Hence it could not be the relation which is prehended as earlier to later, nor could it be the relation which is prehended as later to earlier.

In §§554 to 557, inclusive, McTaggart considers and rejects certain other suggestions as to the nature of the generating relation of *C*-series. Since the terms are states of prehension, it might be suggested that the relation could be that of greater or less accuracy, or greater or less extent of the total field of consciousness, or greater or less clearness. All these

suggestions are rejected on the following grounds. It is doubtful whether even the total experience of a self, taken as a whole from moment to moment, steadily waxes or wanes in respect of any of these characteristics. And, even if it did, this would not suffice. For we want to know what is the generating relation in those *secondary C*-series, whose terms are prehended as this or that experience within the total state of a self at any moment; we do not want to know only what is the generating relation in a *primary C*-series, whose terms are prehended as successive total phases in the history of a self. Now it is quite certain that there is oscillation in respect of all these characteristics in the case of a self's ostensibly successive cogitations of a single object. If, *sub specie temporis*, I cogitate the object *X* at various times in my life, there is no steady increase or decrease in the accuracy or the clearness of my ostensibly successive cogitations of this object.

2.1. *McTaggart's positive Argument*. We come now to the positive argument by which McTaggart claims to prove that the generating relation in any *C*-series is that of being included in without exhausting. The argument is contained in §§ 558 to 567, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*. It falls into three steps. (i) McTaggart claims to show that the various *r*-states of prehension in a given self of a given object cannot be a *set of parts* of the  $\omega$ -prehension in that self of that object. (ii) He argues from this that any two such *r*-prehensions must overlap, and have *at least a part* in common. (iii) Finally, he argues that, of any two such *r*-states of prehension, *x* and *y*, either *x* is *wholly contained in y* without exhausting *y*, or *y* is *wholly contained in x* without exhausting *x*. I will now take the three steps in turn.

(i) The argument rests on the following premise, which McTaggart takes to be self-evident. If a whole has a set of two parts, one of which is a partly erroneous prehension in a certain self of a certain object, and the other of which either is or contains another partly erroneous prehension in the same self of the same object, then this whole cannot be a completely correct prehension in that self of that object.

It follows at once that two misprehensions in a self *S* of an



object *O* could not *both* be members of any *one* set of parts of a correct prehension in *S* of *O*. But, as McTaggart points out in §562, it does not follow that a misprehension in *S* of *O* might not be a member of a set of parts of a correct prehension in *S* of *O*, provided that none of the other members of this set is or contains another misprehension in *S* of *O*. It is possible that *every* misprehension in *S* of *O* is a member of *some* set of parts of a correct prehension in *S* of *O*, though no two misprehensions are members of any one set of parts of a correct prehension.

It seems to me difficult to know what weight to attach to a general principle like this. (a) It is very difficult to think of prehensions as complex particulars, having other particulars as parts. The whole notion is so odd and unfamiliar that one hesitates to be sure about what might be possible or impossible if prehensions really were of this nature.

(b) McTaggart finds no difficulty in conceiving that various misprehensions in *S* of *O* should all be parts of *S*'s one correct prehension of *O*. He insists only that the residue, which remains when an incorrect prehension is conceived to be removed from the correct prehension in the same self of the same object, must not be or contain another misprehension of that object. Now this entails that the residue would not be a prehension in *S* of *O* at all. For, if it were, it would have to be either correct or incorrect. We have just seen that it could not be incorrect. And it could not be correct, for the only correct prehension in *S* of *O* is the  $\omega$ -prehension of which this residue is a part. So the residue could not be a prehension in *S* of *O* at all. But is it not almost as odd that a correct prehension of *O* should be composed of an incorrect prehension of *O* and something which is not a prehension of *O* at all as that it should be composed of two or more incorrect prehensions of *O*?

(c) I cannot help suspecting that McTaggart makes his premise seem more plausible than it is, through an ambiguity of language. In §559 he states it in the following form: "It seems clear that the difference between an erroneous and a correct cognition cannot possibly consist in one or more

additional erroneous cognitions." Now the usual meaning of the phrase "the difference between  $X$  and  $Y$ " is "the characteristics in respect of which  $X$  and  $Y$  are unlike" and not "the residue which would remain if the part  $X$  were removed from the whole  $Y$ ". McTaggart, of course, means his statement to be interpreted in the *latter* sense. But a careless reader might easily interpret it as follows: "It seems clear that the characteristics in respect of which a correct cognition of an object is dissimilar to an erroneous cognition of the same object cannot possibly be reduced to the characteristic of containing one or more additional erroneous cognitions of that object." This is, no doubt, obvious enough. But it is not, and it does not entail, the premise which McTaggart assumes as obvious.

However this may be, McTaggart thinks that he has established his point. After considering in §§ 563 and 564 the bearing of this conclusion on the possibility of such a system of cognitions as Hegel contemplated in his dialectic, McTaggart proceeds in § 565 to lay down his *Twelfth Condition*, which must be fulfilled, beside the eleven already formulated, by any satisfactory theory of Error and *C*-series. The condition simply is the conclusion which he has just reached, and it may be formulated as follows: "Although the various  $r$ -prehensions in a given self of a given object are all parts of the  $\omega$ -prehension in that self of that object, yet *no two* of them can be members of *any one* set of parts of it."

(ii) The next stage in the argument is to prove from this that any two  $r$ -prehensions in the same self of the same object must have a part in common. This is easy. Let  $X$  and  $Y$  be two such  $r$ -prehensions, and let  $Z$  be the  $\omega$ -prehension whose object is the same as theirs. Suppose, if possible, that  $X$  and  $Y$  did not overlap. Then the residue which would remain if  $X$  were removed from  $Z$  would be or contain  $Y$ . For  $X$  and  $Y$  are both parts of  $Z$ , and the removal of  $X$  from  $Z$  would leave  $Y$  untouched if  $X$  and  $Y$  had no part in common. Similarly, if  $Y$  were removed from  $Z$ , the residue would be or contain  $X$ . But this would entail that the correct prehension  $Z$  had a set of parts, one of which was an incorrect prehension in the

same self of the same object and the other of which either was or contained another incorrect prehension in that self of that object. Since this is impossible, the supposition that  $X$  and  $Y$  do not overlap must be rejected. So every  $r$ -prehension must have a part in common with every other  $r$ -prehension in the same  $C$ -series.

(iii) McTaggart concludes straightway from this that, if  $X$  and  $Y$  be any two  $r$ -states of prehension in the same  $C$ -series, then either  $X$  is contained in  $Y$  without completely exhausting  $Y$ , or  $Y$  is contained in  $X$  without completely exhausting  $X$ .

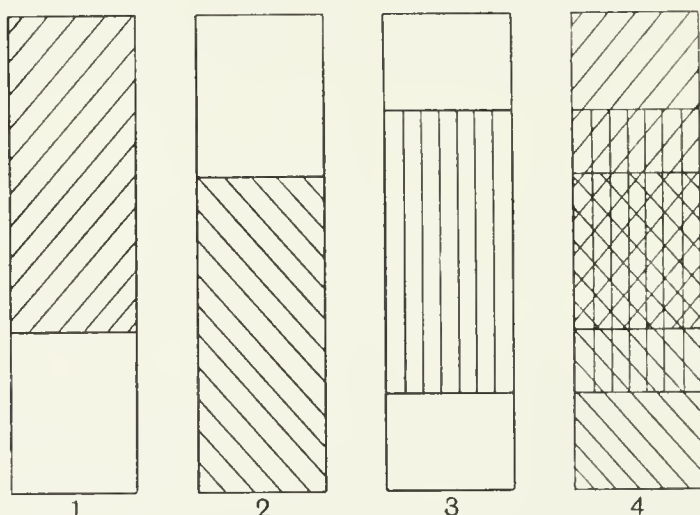


Diagram 1

Now it is quite certain that this does not follow from anything that McTaggart has asserted or proved. The quickest way to show this is to give a diagram in which McTaggart's premises are obviously true and his conclusion is obviously false. I would therefore ask the reader to look at the four figures in the diagram above.

The three figures, 1, 2, and 3, are dissected out of the figure 4, in which they are superposed on each other. The shaded parts in figures 1, 2, and 3 are supposed to represent three different  $r$ -prehensions in the same self of the same object. Now it is quite obvious that each has a part in common with each. But it is equally obvious that none of them is included

in any other. It is evident, then, that McTaggart's conclusion that the relation among the terms of a  $C$ -series is the inclusion-relation is completely unproved by the arguments which he used to establish it. It must be taken, henceforth, simply as an independent postulate in the theory of  $C$ -series; and the only evidence for it will be the indirect evidence which may be derived from the success of the theory in "saving the appearances".

We may conclude the present section by asking ourselves how McTaggart came to make this "howler". I suspect that the answer is as follows. In introducing the subject, in §558, McTaggart uses an example to illustrate the notion of a group of parts which fail to be a set of parts because they overlap each other. The example is that of a foot-rule divided into twelve successive adjoined inch-lengths. These are a set of parts of the rule. But consider the group whose members are the first inch, the first two inches, ..., the first eleven inches, and the whole foot-rule. This is not a set of parts, for the members overlap. Now we know that McTaggart thinks he has proved that the  $r$ -prehensions within a given  $\omega$ -prehension are like the series of first inch, first two inches, ..., and first eleven inches. And we know that he thinks that the  $\omega$ -prehension is like the foot-rule as a whole. Now, unfortunately, he chose an example in which any two terms, not only *overlap*, but stand in the inclusion-relation. Keeping this example in mind at the later part of his discussion, he seems to have slipped into thinking that, in a set of terms any two of which *overlap*, any two terms must stand in the *inclusion-relation*.

### 3. The Quantitative Characteristics of Fragmentary Parts.

In §§568 to 570, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*, McTaggart embarks on a general discussion of the nature of magnitude and the distinction between extensive and intensive magnitude. He then applies his results to the fragmentary parts of selves and of  $\omega$ -prehensions; and concludes that, whilst both  $r$ -prehensions and residues have magnitude, that



of *r*-prehensions is intensive and that of residues is extensive. The whole discussion seems to me to be a mass of confusion, and it will take us some time to clear it up.

3.1. *McTaggart's Theory of Magnitude*. Any term which can be significantly said to be greater than, equal to, or less than another term has magnitude. And, of course, the second term with which the first is compared also has magnitude. McTaggart concludes from this definition that, if *X* be a part, and only a part, of *Y*, both *X* and *Y* have magnitude. For, under these conditions, it can be significantly said that *Y* is greater than *X*.

Next McTaggart asserts that every magnitude is either extensive or intensive. He defines "Extensive Magnitude" as follows. An extensive magnitude is "one in which the difference between two magnitudes"—presumably, of the same kind—"is another magnitude of the same sort". His examples are the following. "The difference between a length of a foot and a length of seven inches is also a length. The difference between a duration of an hour and a duration of a minute is also a duration." If a magnitude is not extensive, it is intensive. Temperature is given as an example of an intensive magnitude. He says, e.g., that "the difference between a temperature of a hundred degrees and a temperature of eighty degrees is not a temperature of twenty degrees". And the essential point is that this difference is not a *temperature* at all.

All these quotations come from §568. I shall now try to clear up the ambiguities and confusions in which they abound. In the first place, we must notice certain ambiguities in the phrase "a magnitude". (a) Primarily it means a characteristic in respect of which terms which have it can be compared with each other and can be said to be equal or unequal, and, if unequal, one can be said to be greater than the other. Temperature, length, and duration are all magnitudes, in this sense. When it is used in this sense we can talk of terms as *having* such and such a magnitude.

(b) The phrase "a magnitude" is often used, however, to denote a term which *has* a magnitude, in the first sense, but

is not a magnitude in that sense. Thus a lump of lead might be called a magnitude, because it has the kind of magnitude called "mass" and the kind of magnitude called "spatial voluminousness". I think it is more usual to talk of "a quantity" than "a magnitude", when this is what is meant. I propose to use the more technical term "Quantum". By calling anything a "quantum", I shall mean that it *has* a magnitude.

(c) There is a further ambiguity when we use a phrase in which the indefinite article is followed by the name of some definite *species* of magnitude, such as "length", "mass", etc. The phrase "a length" may mean a determinate value of the determinable magnitude length, as when we talk of "a length of three inches". Or it may denote a term which *has*, but *is not*, a length in the first sense. Thus a particular bit of string could be called "a length of string", and a particular bit of lead could be called "a mass of lead".

The next ambiguity to be noticed is in the phrase "difference between two magnitudes". McTaggart evidently assumes that, between any two magnitudes of the same kind, there will be a "difference", and that this "difference" will itself be a magnitude of *some* kind. Sometimes it will be of the same kind as the original two magnitudes; in that case the latter are extensive. Sometimes it will be of a different kind from the original two magnitudes; in that case the latter are intensive. Let us now consider this doctrine carefully.

(a) There is one sense of "difference" in which it is a mere triviality to say that there is always a difference between different magnitudes of the same kind. In this sense of "difference" to say that there is a "difference between" a temperature of eighty degrees and a temperature of one hundred degrees is simply another way of saying that these are different determinate values of the determinable magnitude temperature.

(b) If numerical measures have been assigned to the magnitudes in question in any way whatever, there will always be a "difference between" the magnitudes, in the sense of the *arithmetical* difference between their *numerical measures*. This means simply the number which must be added to the

numerical measure of the smaller to give the numerical measure of the greater. In our example the number is, of course, twenty.

Now numbers have magnitude, on McTaggart's definition of "magnitude", since one number can be greater or less than another. And the arithmetical difference between two cardinal numbers is itself a cardinal number. Therefore McTaggart ought to say that *cardinal* numbers, at any rate, have *extensive* magnitude.

We may sum up our results, so far, as follows. There is a sense in which there is always a difference between magnitudes of the same kind, whether they have been given numerical measures or not. But, when "difference" is taken in this sense, the proposition is completely trivial, and the "difference" is not a magnitude and has not magnitude. If numerical measures have been assigned to two magnitudes, there is always an arithmetical difference between these measures; and this, being a number, is itself a magnitude, on McTaggart's definition. But this is not a difference between the *magnitudes themselves*; it is a difference between the numbers which represent the magnitudes in some scale of numerical measurement. And it exists only when the magnitudes in question actually have had numerical measures assigned to them, which is the case only with very few magnitudes. Even when these conditions are fulfilled, the arithmetical difference between the measures is, so far as I can see, no indication that there must be some difference between the magnitudes themselves, and that this must be or have a magnitude.

(c) There is a third sense in which the phrase "difference between two magnitudes of the same kind" can be used. Some wholes have sets of parts, each member of which has a magnitude of the same kind as the magnitude possessed by the whole. There are two important cases to be noted, viz., ( $\alpha$ ) classes with more than one member, and ( $\beta$ ) lines, areas, volumes, and durations. I will now say something about each of these in turn.

( $\alpha$ ) If a class has several members, it will be divisible in

several ways into sets of sub-classes such that (i) each sub-class in a set has at least one member, (ii) no two sub-classes in a set have any members in common, and (iii) every member of the original class is a member of some sub-class in each set. Now each of the sub-classes in any such set can be compared with the original class in respect of at least one kind of magnitude, viz., in respect of the number of terms which it comprises. Let us call this kind of magnitude "comprehensiveness".

Now we can talk of the "difference between" a total class  $\alpha$  and any sub-class  $\beta$  of it, which is not null, in the following sense. The phrase will denote that sub-class of  $\alpha$  which, together with  $\beta$ , just makes up the class  $\alpha$  without omission or overlapping. Let us denote this sub-class of  $\alpha$  by the symbol  $D(\alpha, \beta)$ . Then  $D(\alpha, \beta)$  has comprehensiveness, like  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ . And, of course, the numerical measure of the comprehensiveness of  $D(\alpha, \beta)$  is that number which is the *arithmetical* difference between the numbers which measure the comprehensiveness of  $\alpha$  and of  $\beta$ , assuming that both of them are finite.

I think that it would be much better to call such a class as  $D(\alpha, \beta)$  "the residue of  $\alpha$  without  $\beta$ " than "the difference between  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ ". It will be noticed that a class with more than one member will have extensive magnitude, in McTaggart's sense, in respect of its comprehensiveness. For there will be other terms which have magnitude of the same kind as it has, viz., its sub-classes, such that the "differences" between it and them have magnitudes of the same kind.

( $\beta$ ) The other typical case of a whole which has a set of parts each member of which has a magnitude of the same kind as that possessed by the whole is the following. Longer lines are formed by the adjunction of shorter lines end to end in the same direction. Larger areas are formed by the adjunction of smaller areas along edges in the same plane. And so on. The wholes thus formed have the magnitude called "spatial extension"; and the parts which form such wholes by adjunction with each other have spatial extension of the same kind as that possessed by the wholes which they form.



If the whole has length, all the parts have length; if the whole has area, all the parts have area; and so on.

Here, again, we can talk of "the difference between  $X$  and  $Y$ " in a certain special sense.  $Y$  has a set of parts which, by adjunction, together just make it up.  $X$  is a member of such a set of parts of  $Y$ . "The difference between  $X$  and  $Y$ " means the residue which is left when the part  $X$  is removed from the whole  $Y$  and ceases to be adjoined to the rest of  $Y$ . This residue will itself be an extended whole, having the same spatial dimensionality as  $X$  and  $Y$  have. Here, too, it would be better to talk of "the residue of  $Y$  without  $X$ " than of "the difference between  $X$  and  $Y$ ".

To sum up this part of the discussion. There is an important sense of the phrase "the difference between  $X$  and  $Y$ " which applies, so far as I know, in two and only two cases. It applies when one of them is a class and the other is a subclass of it; and it applies when one consists of a set of adjoined parts and the other is one of the parts in such a set. In both cases it is best to talk of the "residue of  $X$  without  $Y$ " or the "residue of  $Y$  without  $X$ ", as the case may be. Since the residue will, in both cases, have the same kind of magnitude as the terms  $X$  and  $Y$  have, both these cases answer to McTaggart's definition of an "extensive magnitude". But the name has usually been confined to the second case.

I think that the term "extensive magnitude", as commonly used, might be defined as follows. A species of magnitude  $M$  is extensive if and only if anything which has it either (i) can be adjoined to other terms which have it to give another term which has it, or (ii) has a set of adjoined parts which all have it. I have put in the two alternative clauses to cover the possibility that a certain species of extensive magnitude might have an intrinsic maximal value or an intrinsic minimal value or both. A term which had a certain magnitude in its intrinsically minimal value would answer to (i) but not to (ii). A term which had a certain magnitude in its intrinsically maximal value would answer to (ii) but not to (i). A term which had a certain magnitude in any intermediate value would answer to both (i) and (ii). I propose to call the notion,

thus defined, “*strictly* extensive magnitude”; for it is a much more restricted notion than “extensive magnitude”, as defined by McTaggart. It involves the notion of adjunction. This is, I think, indefinable; but it is perfectly familiar and intelligible.

Now, when the phrase “difference between the two magnitudes  $X$  and  $Y$ ” means “residue of  $Y$  without  $X$ ”, it has no application unless either (i)  $Y$  is a class and  $X$  is a sub-class of  $Y$ , or (ii)  $X$  is a member of a set of adjoined parts of  $Y$  which together exactly make up  $Y$ . In the first case  $X$  and  $Y$  both have comprehensiveness, and may be called “Comprehensive Quanta”. In the second case  $X$  and  $Y$  both have spatial or temporal extension, or something analogous to these magnitudes, and may be called “Strictly Extensive Quanta”.

We find McTaggart talking of “the difference between the duration of an hour and the duration of a minute”. And it is plain from the context that he is generally thinking of residues when he talks of differences. But, strictly speaking, there is nothing which could be described as “the residue of a certain stretch of Julius Caesar’s history of an hour’s duration without a certain stretch of Mark Antony’s history of a minute’s duration”. There is here nothing that can properly be called a “difference” except the purely *arithmetical* difference between the *number* sixty and the *number* one, which express respectively the durations in minutes of these two stretches of history. On the other hand, there is something that can be described as the “residue of Julius Caesar’s history without the first twenty years of it”; for this is a stretch of history which is adjoined to the first twenty years’ stretch to make up the whole history of Julius Caesar.

There is, however, a looser sense in which one could talk of “the residue of a certain stretch of Julius Caesar’s history of an hour’s duration without a certain stretch of Mark Antony’s history of a minute’s duration”. You might mean by this phrase simply a stretch of Mark Antony’s history of such duration that, if it were adjoined to this minute-long stretch of his history, it would give a total stretch of his history of

the same duration as this hour-long stretch of Julius Caesar's history. In some such sense as this one could talk of "the residue of  $Y$  without  $X$ ", provided that  $X$  and  $Y$  had different determinate values of the same strictly extensive magnitude, even though  $X$  were not a member of a set of adjoined parts of  $Y$ .

But there are two points to notice about this looser sense of the phrase. (i) Even *it* has no application unless  $X$  and  $Y$  are *strictly* extensive quanta of the same species. And (ii) unless  $X$  is a member of a set of adjoined parts of  $Y$  there is not the least reason to think that anything actually exists answering to the description "the residue of  $Y$  without  $X$ ". There is, no doubt, a certain determinate value of a certain species of strictly extensive magnitude which a term answering to this description *would* possess if there were such a term. But whether there *is* any term which *does* answer to the description and possess this value of the magnitude remains completely uncertain.

I have now cleared up the dangerous ambiguities which lie beneath the smooth face of McTaggart's statements in §568 of *The Nature of Existence*. We can therefore proceed to consider the rest of McTaggart's argument. It is quite clear from §§569 and 570 that he held the following propositions to be certain. (i) If  $X$  and  $Y$  have different values of the same species of magnitude, then there is *always* something which can be called "the residue of  $Y$  without  $X$ " or "the residue of  $X$  without  $Y$ ", even though the magnitude possessed by  $X$  and  $Y$  be *not extensive* in the sense defined by McTaggart. (ii) This residue itself *has magnitude*. (iii) The magnitude possessed by such a residue is *always extensive*, in the sense defined by McTaggart. In the last paragraph of §569 he takes two temperatures as his example, and in §560 he takes two pleasures of different intensity as his example.

Now it is very difficult even to attach a meaning to this doctrine, as applied to quanta which are not strictly extensive. Suppose that  $X$  and  $Y$  are two terms which have a certain non-extensive magnitude  $m$  in the different degrees  $m_1$  and  $m_2$  respectively. Suppose that  $Y$  has  $m$  to a higher

degree than  $X$  has. Then we are asked to believe that, in some sense, we can "add" to  $X$  a term  $D(Y, X)$ , which has a certain kind of *extensive* magnitude  $\mu$ , and thereby produce a whole  $Z$  which has the *non-extensive* magnitude  $m$  in the same degree  $m_2$  as  $Y$ .

Now, unless we are told what is meant here by "adding", we can attach no meaning to the statement which we are asked to believe. What is contemplated cannot be *arithmetical* addition; for  $X$  and  $Y$  are not numbers. They are intensive quanta, such as pleasures. Again, it cannot be *adjunction*; for we cannot adjoin a term whose magnitude is not extensive to one whose magnitude is extensive. What, then, can it possibly mean?

The only possibility seems to be the following. Suppose that the non-extensive magnitude  $m$  were connected with the extensive magnitude  $\mu$  so that a term could not have  $m$  unless it, or something else intimately connected with it, had  $\mu$ . Then  $D(Y, X)$ , which by hypothesis has  $\mu$ , could be "added to"  $X$  in one or other of the following senses. (a) Suppose that  $X$  itself has both  $m$  and  $\mu$ . Then  $D(Y, X)$  could be adjoined to  $X$  in respect of  $\mu$ , and a whole  $Z$  would be formed. Now this whole  $Z$  would have a certain value of  $\mu$ . And it might also have the correlated magnitude  $m$  in the degree  $m_2$  which is characteristic of  $Y$ . (b) Suppose that  $X$  has only  $m$  and not  $\mu$ , but that it is correlated with a term  $\xi$  which has only  $\mu$  and not  $m$ . Then  $D(Y, X)$  could be adjoined to  $\xi$ , though not to  $X$ . A whole  $\zeta$  would thus be formed. This would have a certain value of  $\mu$ . Now it might be correlated with a term  $Z$  which had  $m$  in the degree  $m_2$  which is characteristic of  $Y$ . (Of course, in either case, there might be something more than mere adjunction. There might be some kind of intimate mixture; as when we talk of "adding" one solution to another, which generally implies thoroughly stirring them together.) On either of these alternative suppositions we could say, in an extremely Pickwickian sense, that the particular value of  $\mu$  possessed by  $D(Y, X)$  is the "increment" which, when added to the degree  $m_1$  of the intensive magnitude  $m$  gives the degree  $m_2$  of  $m$ .

Unless this very complicated set of causal conditions is



fulfilled, or something very much like it, I can attach no meaning whatever to McTaggart's propositions, as applied to intensive quanta. In some cases we have good empirical reasons for thinking that such conditions are fulfilled. The facts about temperature, e.g., can be brought into a coherent system on these principles. But there is not the least reason to think that it follows from the nature of magnitude, as such, that all intensive magnitudes will be correlated with extensive magnitudes in the way which has to be presupposed in order to give meaning to McTaggart's propositions.

I therefore see no reason to accept McTaggart's principle that, to every ascending series of degrees,  $m_1, m_2, m_3, \dots m_n$  of an intensive magnitude  $m$ , there will be an ascending series of extensive "increments"  $\mu_{12}, \mu_{13}, \dots \mu_{1n}$ , where  $\mu_{1r}$  represents the "increment" which, when "added to" the degree  $m_1$ , will give the degree  $m_r$ . The principle is not even intelligible and doubtful; it is simply devoid of meaning.

I suspect that McTaggart muddled himself into thinking that this form of words expresses a genuine proposition, and that this proposition is self-evidently true, in the following way. (i) He knew empirically of a number of physical facts, such as those about temperature, where certain causal conditions are fulfilled which make it possible to give a meaning to statements of this kind and to accept them, provided that they are interpreted as inaccurate but convenient summaries. He failed to recognise the implied causal conditions, and took the statements to be accurate and literally true. (ii) He knew *a priori* that, if the various degrees of an intensive magnitude are expressed by an ascending series of numbers,  $n_1, n_2, n_3, \dots n_n$ , the *arithmetical* differences between the smallest of these and the rest, taken in order, will form an ascending series of *numbers* of the form  $n_2 - n_1, n_3 - n_1, \dots n_n - n_1$ . And he knew *a priori* the purely arithmetical proposition that

$$n_r - n_1 = (n_2 - n_1) + (n_3 - n_2) + \dots + (n_r - n_{r-1}),$$

where the "+" represents arithmetical addition, and the "-" represents arithmetical subtraction. And so he was able to count "increments" as quanta which, when added

together, give a quantum of the same kind as themselves. So he could count them as having "extensive magnitude", as defined by him.

He then mixed up his *a priori* knowledge about the *numerical measures* of intensive magnitudes and about their *arithmetical* sums and differences with his empirical half-knowledge about certain physical intensive magnitudes and their correlations with certain physical extensive magnitudes. The result was that he imagined that a form of words, which is in fact meaningless nonsense, expresses an *a priori* truth about intensive and extensive magnitudes, as such.

3.2. *Application to Fragmentary Parts.* We must now consider the application which McTaggart made of this nonsense about magnitude in general to the particular case of the fragmentary parts of a self or an  $\omega$ -prehension.

The position at present is as follows. He has assumed that all *r*-states of prehension in a given self of a certain object are parts, in the *C*-dimension, of the  $\omega$ -prehension in that self of that object. He claims to have shown that the residue which is left when any *r*-prehension is conceived to be removed from the corresponding  $\omega$ -prehension is not a state of prehension at all. He has inferred correctly from this that any two *r*-prehensions in a *C*-series must have a part in common. And he has inferred incorrectly from this that, of any two *r*-prehensions in a *C*-series, one must be wholly contained in without exhausting the other.

McTaggart's argument to prove that the terms of any *C*-series are intensive quanta may now be stated as follows.

(i) Every term in a *C*-series either contains the rest of its terms as parts, or is contained as a part in the rest of its terms, or stands in the one relation to some of its terms and in the other relation to the rest of them. Now, of any two terms which stand in the relation of whole and part, the former is greater than the latter. But any two terms of which it is significant to say that one is greater than the other possess some one species of magnitude, and are therefore quanta of some one kind. Therefore every term in a *C*-series is a quantum, and all are quanta of the same kind.

(ii) Consider any two terms  $X$  and  $Y$  of a certain  $C$ -series. Suppose that of these it is  $X$  which is contained in  $Y$  and  $Y$  which contains  $X$ . Then the part  $X$  and the whole  $Y$  are both states of prehension in a certain self of a certain object. But the residue which would remain if  $X$  were removed from  $Y$  is not a state of prehension at all, and does not contain any state of prehension. Now, if the magnitude possessed by  $X$  and  $Y$  were extensive,  $X$  would be a member of a set of parts of  $Y$  all of which would possess the same kind of magnitude as  $X$  and  $Y$  possess. Since  $X$  and  $Y$  are states of prehension, whilst the residue of  $Y$  without  $X$  neither is nor contains a state of prehension, this condition is not fulfilled. Therefore the magnitude possessed by  $X$  and  $Y$  is not extensive. But any magnitude which is not extensive is intensive. Therefore  $X$  and  $Y$  are *intensive* quanta.

I will now criticise this argument. (a) The first step in it is a correctly drawn consequence of McTaggart's definitions. But we must not imagine that the conclusion that all the terms in any  $C$ -series are quanta of the same kind tells us anything new or important. It merely repeats in other words that any two terms of a  $C$ -series are related by *some* one form of the part-whole relation. Now this extremely general relation covers the relation of an individual to a class of which it is a member, the relation of a sub-class to a class which contains it, the relation of a spatial or temporal part to a spatial or temporal whole, and so on. Now we have been told nothing positive about the residue which remains when one term of a  $C$ -series is removed from another. We have received only the negative information that it is *not* a state of prehension, and is therefore in that very important respect heterogeneous with the terms of a  $C$ -series. So we know almost nothing positive about the specific form of the part-whole relation in the case of the terms of a  $C$ -series. And, for that reason, the conclusion that they are all quanta of a certain one kind has the bare minimum of meaning.

(b) The second step of the argument contains several fallacies. The only conclusion which can be legitimately drawn is that the terms of a  $C$ -series are not extensive quanta *in*

*respect of their property of being states of prehension* in a certain self of a certain object. If a term has several characteristics *A*, *B*, and *C*, it may be an extensive quantum in respect of *A*, because *A* is an extensive magnitude; it may be an intensive quantum in respect of *B*, because *B* is an intensive magnitude; and it may not be a quantum at all in respect of *C*, because *C* is not a magnitude at all. Take, e.g., an auditory sensum due to a certain note being struck on a piano in the neighbourhood of a human being. This is an extensive quantum in respect of its duration; it is an intensive quantum in respect of its loudness and its pitch; and it is not a quantum at all in respect of the characteristic which distinguishes it from an auditory sensum of the same pitch and loudness due to bowing a violin string instead of striking a piano note. Granted, then, that the terms of a *C*-series *are* quanta of some kind, and that they *are not* extensive quanta in respect of their property of being states of prehension, McTaggart has no right to conclude that they are intensive quanta. And he has no right to conclude that, if they are intensive quanta, they are not *also* extensive quanta. For, granted that they are not *extensive* quanta with respect to the property of being states of prehension, it remains quite possible that they are not quanta *of any kind* with respect to that property, simply because "being a state of prehension" is not a magnitude of any kind. And, again, even if they were intensive quanta in respect of the property of being states of prehension, this would not prevent them from being *also* extensive quanta in respect of some other property possessed by them.

It is plain, then, that McTaggart's argument to prove that the terms of a *C*-series have intensive magnitude and have not extensive magnitude is a complete failure. I strongly suspect that the mistake arose through neglecting to distinguish between the two senses in which the word "magnitude" is used, viz., ( $\alpha$ ) to mean a *characteristic* in respect of which two terms that possess it stand in the relation of greater, equal, or less, and ( $\beta$ ) to mean a *particular* which has such a characteristic. Obviously a *characteristic* which is a magnitude cannot be both an extensive and an intensive magnitude;



and it is quite plausible to hold that, if it is not an extensive magnitude, it is an intensive one, on the ground that there is no third alternative. But it is equally obvious that a *particular* which is a quantum might be both an extensive and an intensive quantum; since it might have two characteristics, one of which was an extensive magnitude and the other of which was an intensive magnitude. If, however, one fails to distinguish between "magnitude" in the first sense and "magnitude" in the sense of quantum, one will be liable to think it obvious that a *quantum* cannot be both extensive and intensive.

3.21. *The Introduction of D-Series.* We come now to McTaggart's attempt to prove that residues, which are the second of the two sub-classes into which the class of fragmentary parts is sub-divided, have *extensive* magnitude.

The argument depends on the assumption that, to every series of ascending degrees of an intensive magnitude, e.g.,  $m_1, m_2, \dots m_r \dots$  there must correspond an ascending series of increments, which are extensive magnitudes. This series, as before, may be symbolised by  $\mu_{12}, \mu_{13}, \dots \mu_{1r}, \dots$ . Here  $\mu_{1r}$  represents the determinate value of a certain *extensive* magnitude  $\mu$  which must be possessed by a term if the "addition" of that term to one which has the *intensive* magnitude  $m$  in the degree  $m_1$  is to produce a term which has  $m$  in the degree  $m_r$ . Now we are supposed to have proved that the terms of any *C-series* all have a certain intensive magnitude in different degrees, and that they form an ascending series in respect of the degrees of this magnitude. Hence, McTaggart argues, there will be a series of extensive increments in connexion with any *C-series*. As before, we will denote the values of this supposed extensive magnitude by  $\mu_{12}, \mu_{13}, \dots \mu_{1r} \dots$ . In order to be quite clear, we ought to distinguish between this series of *values of a magnitude* and a series of *quanta* whose terms have this magnitude in these values. I propose to denote such a series of quanta by  $d_{12}, d_{13}, \dots d_{1r}, \dots$ . According to McTaggart, there will be such a series of extensive quanta in connexion with any *C-series*. He calls such a series a "*D-series*". It would be a matter of indifference whether

one identified a  $D$ -series with my series  $d_{12}, d_{13}, \dots d_{1r}, \dots$ , or with the obviously equivalent series  $d_{12}, d_{23}, \dots d_{(r-1)r} \dots$ . In any case, as I have shown in Sub-section 3.1 of this chapter, the whole argument is fallacious, and the notion of a  $D$ -series, thus defined, is nonsensical.

The notion of  $D$ -series is introduced in §571. McTaggart goes on to assert that, if a series of intensive quanta should have a first term, the corresponding  $D$ -series will also have a first term. Moreover, he says, *one and the same* term will be the first in *both* series. The most plausible way of putting what he seems to have in mind is the following.

Suppose we have a series of terms, each of which has the intensive magnitude  $m$  to a different degree, arranged in ascending order. Suppose that  $u_1$ , which has the lowest degree of  $m$  in the series, has  $m$  to the finite degree  $m_1$ . Then we can regard  $u_1$  as "produced" by the "addition" of a certain increment to a term which has zero degree of  $m$ . Let us call the magnitude of this increment  $m_{01}$ . Then the increment itself will be the quantum  $d_{01}$ . It will be the first term in a  $D$ -series whose subsequent terms are  $d_{02}, d_{03}, \dots d_{0r} \dots$ . And the first term of this  $D$ -series will be identical with  $u_1$ , the first term of the  $C$ -series.

I will now comment on this argument. (i) Unless it be admitted that one and the same term can have both extensive and intensive magnitude, it involves a contradiction. For the members of the  $C$ -series have intensive magnitude and the members of the corresponding  $D$ -series have extensive magnitude. Therefore, unless it be possible for one and the same term to have both kinds of magnitude, it is impossible for any term to be a member of both series.

(ii) If the *first* term of a series of intensive quanta can be identified with the first term of the corresponding increment-series for the reasons given by McTaggart, it seems evident that *every* term of the former series can be identified with the corresponding term of the latter series. If  $u_1$  can properly be regarded as produced by the "addition" of the increment  $d_{01}$  to a term which has zero degree of  $m$ , surely any other term  $u_r$  can with equal propriety be regarded as produced by the

“addition” of the increment  $d_{0r}$  to a term which has zero degree of  $m$ . It would follow that *every* member of either series is a member of both. And this would be impossible unless *every* member had *both* extensive and intensive magnitude.

(iii) I am deeply suspicious of the argument for identifying the first terms of the two series. It seems to me to depend on taking two mutually inconsistent views about the hypothetical term which has zero degree of  $m$ . When we talk of “adding” an increment to it and producing thereby a certain term in the series of intensive quanta, we must be thinking of it as some actual particular which has  $m$  but has zero degree of it. It might, e.g., be a feeling which is just neutral as between pleasantness and unpleasantness. Otherwise the notion of adding an increment to it and producing an actual intensive quantum is meaningless. But, on the other hand, suppose we now ask the following question. How can a whole composed of this term and a certain increment  $d_{01}$  possibly be *identical with* the increment  $d_{01}$  itself? How can a whole possibly be identical with one of its own parts? The only answer that could be made is that the so-called “term with zero degree of intensive magnitude  $m$ ” is nothing, since it has zero degree of  $m$ . And so the doctrine which is asserted in §573 can be maintained only by regarding this hypothetical “term with zero degree of  $m$ ” as *an actual particular* at one point of the argument and as *nothing at all* at another point of the argument.

As usual, McTaggart has muddled himself by confusing quanta with magnitudes, and the determinate values of a magnitude with their numerical measures. The number zero is something, in the sense that it can be made the subject of *arithmetical* addition, subtraction, etc. And it is also nothing, in the sense that the arithmetical sum of it and any other number is identical with that other number. But actual quanta cannot be juggled with in this way.

It seems to me, then, that McTaggart has completely failed to prove that there must be a  $D$ -series corresponding to every  $C$ -series. He has completely failed to prove that, if there were

a  $D$ -series corresponding to a  $C$ -series which had a first term, then the first term of the  $C$ -series would be identical with that of the  $D$ -series. And I have shown that, if this were so, then *every* member of either series would be identical with the corresponding member of the other, and would therefore have *both* extensive and intensive magnitude if we accept what McTaggart claims to have proved about  $C$ -series and about  $D$ -series.

3.3. *Restatement of the Theory.* It is evident that McTaggart's theory about the nature of the magnitudes possessed by the two kinds of fragmentary part is, as it stands, a most unholy mess. But I believe that all that he really needed to hold can be stated quite simply and clearly in the following way. In order to do this I would call the reader's attention to the diagram given below, which illustrates what I am going to say.

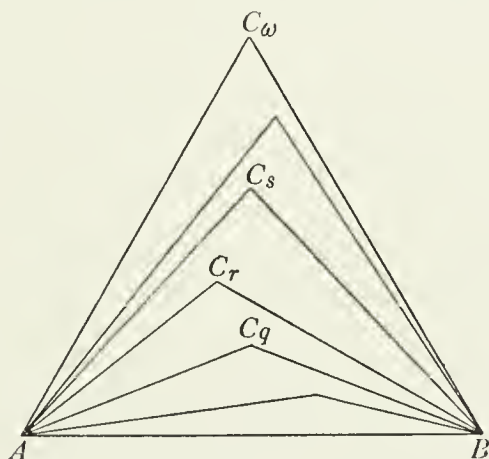


Diagram 2

I suggest that every  $r$ -state of prehension has a certain *extensive* magnitude, which may be compared to area. This belongs also to the  $\omega$ -prehension in which all the  $r$ -states of prehension in a given  $C$ -series are contained. Every pre-maximal term of a  $C$ -series has also the property of being a partly erroneous state of prehension in a certain self of a certain object. The maximal end-term is the one completely correct prehension in that self of that object. Now I see no



reason to think that the characteristic of being a state of prehension in a certain self of a certain object is a *magnitude* at all. Therefore I see no reason to ascribe *intensive* magnitude to the terms of a *C*-series in addition to the extensive magnitude which I have already ascribed to them. On the other hand, I have no objection to ascribing intensive magnitudes to them if any positive reason should appear for doing so; since I hold it to be obvious that one and the same particular may be an extensive quantum in respect of one of its characteristics and an intensive quantum in respect of another of them.

Now I suggest that, for the present purpose, the property of being the one *perfectly correct* prehension in a certain self of a certain object may be represented by the property of being the *equilateral triangle* on a certain base. Thus, for the present purpose, an  $\omega$ -prehension may be represented by the equilateral triangle  $AC_\omega B$  on the base  $AB$  in Diagram 2. And I suggest that the property of being a *partially incorrect* state of prehension in the same self of the same object may be represented by the property of being a triangle on the same base which falls within the equilateral triangle. Thus, for the present purpose, the pre-maximal terms of the *C*-series whose maximal end-term is represented by  $AC_\omega B$  are represented by such triangles as  $AC_r B$  and  $AC_s B$  in Diagram 2. The fact that none of the pre-maximal terms is perfectly correct is represented by the fact that none of the representative triangles is, or could be, equilateral. The fact that some of them are more nearly correct than others is represented by the fact that some of the representative triangles, e.g.,  $AC_s B$ , are isosceles and thus bear a certain formal resemblance in shape to  $AC_\omega B$ ; whilst others, such as  $AC_r B$ , are more or less scalene. And the fact that there may be, *sub specie temporis*, oscillations in the accuracy with which the same mind prehends the same object is represented by the fact that a scalene triangle, like  $AC_r B$  may come between two isosceles triangles, like  $AC_q B$  and  $AC_s B$ .

So much for the *r*-states of prehension which form the pre-final terms of a *C*-series; now for the residues. On my

view the residues have the same kind of extensive magnitude as the terms of the  $C$ -series, and therefore it is sensible to talk of a residue being adjoined to one term  $P_{12}^r$  to produce a more extensive term  $P_{12}^s$  in the same  $C$ -series. But they do not have the property of being states of prehension. This likeness and this unlikeness between residues and the terms of a  $C$ -series are brought out quite clearly in the diagram. The residue of  $P_{12}^s$  without  $P_{12}^r$  is represented by the area  $AC_s BC_r A$ . This neither is a triangle on the base  $AB$  nor does it contain any such triangle as a part.

Now there is nothing paradoxical in the fact that a part of  $AC_\omega B$  which *is* a triangle on the base  $AB$ , and another part of  $AC_\omega B$  which *has not* this property, should by adjunction form a whole which *has* this property. And McTaggart might say that it is no more paradoxical that a term which is a state of misprehension of a certain object, and another term which is not and does not contain a state of prehension at all, should both be parts of the same  $\omega$ -prehension and should by adjunction form a whole which is another state of misprehension in the same self of the same object.

I think that this is much the most plausible form in which to put McTaggart's theory, and I do not suppose that he would have objected to this restatement. Henceforth I shall take it that this is the right account of what he had in mind. It must be noted that my criticisms on his general theory of magnitude do not in the least affect the internal consistency of the theory of  $C$ -series and residues, when thus restated. The primary effect of my criticisms is to show that the theory must consist of more *independent* assumptions than McTaggart supposed. They show that certain essential features in it, which he thought he could prove by means of general considerations about the nature of magnitude, must be postulated independently. This does, of course, in some measure diminish the initial, and therefore, the final, probability of the theory as a whole. But it does no further damage to it.

3.4. *The Nature of the Extensive Magnitude.* What is the extensive magnitude which, on our interpretation, belongs to all fragmentary parts and to selves and  $\omega$ -prehensions as

wholes? In our illustrative diagrams the extensive magnitude is, of course, simply area. What can it be in the mental terms which these diagrams represent spatially? McTaggart discusses this question in §§ 572 and 573 of *The Nature of Existence*.

The first point is that the various  $r$ -prehensions within a given  $\omega$ -prehension, e.g., in  $P_{12}^\omega$ , cannot differ simply by being prehensions in  $P_1$  of more or fewer *parts* of  $P_2$ . Otherwise they would differ only in *completeness* and not in *correctness*. For the same reason the various terms in  $\Pi_{12}$  cannot differ simply by being prehensions in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$  as having more or fewer of the characteristics which in fact belong to it. According to McTaggart the only alternative left is the following. Each term in  $\Pi_{12}$  must be a state of prehension in  $P_1$  by which  $P_1$  prehends  $P_2$  *as a whole*; but each successive term in the series must be a state of prehension by which  $P_2$  as a whole is "*prehended more*". This is the position reached at the end of § 572.

In § 573 McTaggart asks whether we are acquainted with anything like this supposed extensive magnitude, which we might call "Amount of Prehension" by a given self of a given object as a whole. He says that the notion is a very difficult one. He offers two analogies, but he admits that they are both imperfect. The first is the change that takes place in our experience as we pass slowly from sleep, through a state of drowsiness, to a state of being fully awake. The second is the change which takes place in our experience when we are looking at an object through a mist which gradually gets thinner. (The best way to try the experiment is to breathe heavily on one's glasses, or hold them over the steam from a cup of tea, and then don them as quickly as possible.)

He admits that, with the interpretation which is usually put on these experiences, they are not really analogous to the conception which he is trying to illustrate. In the first place, the change here is often a change in the number of parts or of characteristics which are discriminated in the prehended object. Secondly, although the ordinary philosopher admits the existence of misperception, in *his* sense of the word, he

does not admit the possibility of what McTaggart calls "mis-perception", i.e., misprehension. And it is states of misprehension with which we are concerned. Now most philosophers and psychologists would say (and McTaggart would agree) that the person whose eye-glasses are gradually clearing never at any stage *prehends* the physical objects which he is said to be "perceiving more and more". They would say that at every stage he is prehending only visual sense. And they would be inclined to say (rightly or wrongly) that he is not "prehending one and the same visual sense-field more and more" but is prehending a series of more and more highly differentiated visual sense-fields.

There is one other difficulty, which McTaggart does not mention. Perhaps it is only verbal. It is as follows. This extensive magnitude must belong to residues as well as to terms in *C*-series. In fact, if McTaggart were consistent, he ought to hold that it belongs *only* to residues. But residues neither are nor contain states of prehension. Now it does seem extremely odd that particulars which are not and do not contain states of prehension should have an extensive magnitude which can be appropriately called "amount of prehension".

I think we must conclude that, although an extensive magnitude of *some* kind must be postulated for selves,  $\omega$ -prehensions, *r*-prehensions, and residues, we have no idea what it is. It is therefore safer not to give it any name such as "amount of prehension" which may carry with it unjustifiable associations. We had better use some perfectly neutral technical term, such as "*C*-extension".

3.5. *Are all Terms in a C-series States of Prehension?* We have hitherto assumed that all the terms in every *C*-series are states of prehension. In §578 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart professes to prove that this is so, by means of his notion of "amount of prehension". The argument is as follows.

We know that *some* terms in an inclusion-series whose maximal term is an  $\omega$ -prehension are states of prehension in the same self of the same object. Consider any such term  $P_{12}^r$ .



Now take any other term  $P_{12}^s$  in the same *C*-series. We know that either  $P_{12}^r$  is composed of  $P_{12}^s$  and an adjoined residue, or  $P_{12}^s$  is composed of  $P_{12}^r$  and an adjoined residue. We also know that the residue has that extensive magnitude which is called "amount of prehension". Suppose, if possible, that  $P_{12}^s$  were not a state of prehension at all. Then, on the first alternative, a state of prehension  $P_{12}^r$  is composed of two adjoined parts, one of which *is not* a state of prehension, and the other of which has the magnitude called "amount of prehension". On the second alternative  $P_{12}^s$ , which *is not* a state of prehension at all, is composed of two parts, one of which *is* a state of prehension, and the other of which has the magnitude called "amount of prehension". Both these alternatives are incredible. And so we must reject the supposition that  $P_{12}^s$  is not a state of prehension.

I will now comment on this argument. (i) As a matter of fact McTaggart considers only the second alternative. But the first is also possible. And it might be that the first is not incredible even if the second is. (ii) It does not seem to me any more paradoxical that a whole, composed of a state of prehension and of something which *is not* a prehension but *has* a certain amount of prehension, should not be itself a state of prehension, than that something which is not a state of prehension should have a certain "amount of prehension". All the words that are being used are little more than names with a more or less familiar ring about them, and it is difficult to say what would be possible or likely and what would be impossible or unlikely in those misty regions which they vaguely indicate. (iii) When the notion of "amount of prehension" was first introduced the possibility that some terms in an inclusion-series might not be states of prehension at all had not been envisaged. Perhaps, if it had been, we should not have been prepared to admit that the extensive magnitude possessed by the increments could properly be called "amount of prehension". And so the argument may very well be circular. (iv) It seems far better simply to take the proposition under discussion as an independent assumption than to attempt to prove it in this feeble way.

## CHAPTER XLIII

### COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONDITIONS

We have now to test the theory by its ability to "save the appearances", i.e., to comply with the twelve conditions which have been laid down. The first eleven are stated in Chap. XXXVIII of the present work, and the twelfth is stated in Sub-section 2·1 p. 423 of Chap. XLII. McTaggart discusses the question of compliance with the conditions in Chap. I of *The Nature of Existence*. We will take the conditions in turn.

*Condition I.* Obviously the theory fulfils the condition that any *C*-series must be capable of existing within particulars which are minds or states of mind or groups whose members are minds or mental states or both; for the terms of the *C*-series are states of prehension.

*Condition II.* The second condition is that the theory must allow for the existence of erroneous prehensions. Obviously, in one sense of "allow", McTaggart's theory answers this condition, since all the pre-maximal terms in any *C*-series are assumed to be states of misprehension. But this does not settle the question. McTaggart admitted in §§513 and 514 that there is a great difficulty in granting the possibility that prehension could be erroneous. In §515 he deferred this question until he had completed his theory of *C*-series. He returns to it now in §591.

Here he says that any satisfactory theory must reconcile the existence of erroneous prehensions with "our certainty, the *prima facie* form of which is that every prehension is correct at the time when it is made". (I have, as usual, substituted "prehension" for "perception".) He asserts that his theory does fulfil this condition. His argument is extremely obscure; but the following seems to be a fair account of it.

Since nothing is really temporal, the statement that every prehension is correct at the time when it is made cannot be

literally true. To amend it we must substitute for the phrase "the time when it is made" the phrase "the position which it occupies in the prehending self's *C*-series". The principle now becomes "Every prehension is correct in the position which it occupies in the prehending self's *C*-series." McTaggart then interprets this to mean "Every prehension will have no more and no less error in it than is involved in the fact that it occupies the particular position which it does in the prehending self's *C*-series." Now, according to the general theory, every prehension which occupies any pre-maximal position in a *C*-series is to some extent a state of misprehension. And so the theory allows for the existence of misprehension and reconciles it with the general principle that every prehension is correct at the time at which it is made.

This seems to me thoroughly unsatisfactory. (i) If the general principle is put in the form that every prehension is correct at the time when it is made, it is so condensed that its meaning is not at all clear. When McTaggart first raised the question, in §§ 513 to 518, the principle was more fully stated. The reader may be referred to Section 3 of Chap. xxxvi of the present work for a discussion of this subject. It will be remembered that the principle was first stated in temporal terms; then modified because of an ambiguity in the phrase "the time when it was made", due to the finite duration of the specious present; and finally re-stated in terms of *C*-series. Now it will be noticed that, when McTaggart reverts to the subject in § 591, not a word is said about the specious present; and so the argument in § 591 seems irrelevant to the principle as formulated more carefully in §§ 513 to 518.

Let us interpret the principle, as formulated carefully in the earlier sections with due attention to the facts about the specious present, in terms of *C*-series. It would surely take the following form. Suppose that a certain term  $P_1^r$ , in the primary *C*-series  $\Pi_1$ , contains a prehension  $P_{12}^r$  of  $P_2$  as characterised by  $X$ . Then it is self-evidently true that *either* the corresponding term  $P_2^r$  of the series  $\Pi_2$  is characterised by  $X$ , *or*, if not, some other term of  $\Pi_2$  which is very near to  $P_2^r$  in the series, is characterised by  $X$ . This seems to me the natural

and inevitable interpretation of the principle which McTaggart formulated in §§ 513 to 518. Now he accepted this principle, subject to the correction involved in translating it from temporal terms into the corresponding non-temporal terms, as we have now done.

(ii) Now, if this principle be accepted, it is not, so far as I can see, compatible with accepting McTaggart's theory of *C*-series. In order to convince oneself of this, one has only to substitute for the variable *X* in the general statement of the principle some *temporal* characteristic, such as presentness. It will follow at once that, if there is at any stage in *P*<sub>1</sub>'s inclusion-series a prehension of any term as present, then *either* that term itself *or* a near neighbour of it in the *C*-series of which it is a member *really is* present. But, of course, McTaggart asserts that there are prehensions of terms as present and denies that any terms *are* present.

(iii) In a footnote on p. 200 of Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*, which I quoted for future reference on p. 334 of the present work, McTaggart explicitly says that, if a person prehends a sensum as round and yellow, then it self-evidently *is* round and yellow. Now he certainly would deny that anything is round or yellow, for he holds that nothing can be spatially extended. And he certainly would admit that some particulars are prehended as being round and yellow. I do not see how he can possibly reconcile statements like these with the existence of misprehension of such a kind and such a degree as he has to postulate in the rest of his system.

(iv) To sum up. The situation with regard to misprehension seems to be as follows. McTaggart, having admitted a general principle which appears to make misprehension almost impossible, proceeds to formulate a theory of error and *C*-series which postulates that every term but one in any *C*-series is a state of misprehension. If we complain that it seems doubtful whether such an hypothesis is admissible in view of the general principle, we are referred forward to § 591 for the removal of our doubts. When we get to § 591 we find that the principle is re-stated in a condensed form, which certainly does not appear to be equivalent to the original careful statement in



§514, and is then interpreted in non-temporal terms. The interpretation is that no prehension can contain any other error except that which is involved by its position in the *C*-series of which it is a term. This seems entirely different from the interpretation which McTaggart puts on the principle in §515. The principle which is carefully stated in §514 is correctly interpreted in §515. If it is true, no term could possibly be prehended as having any characteristic which does not actually belong to *some* term. The only possible error in prehension would be a *dislocation* of characteristics, so that a characteristic which in fact qualifies a certain term in a *C*-series is prehended as qualifying a different, though neighbouring, term in the same series, which does not really possess it. Now McTaggart's theory of *C*-series requires misprehension in a much more radical sense than this. It requires that certain terms shall be prehended as having characteristics, such as roundness, yellowness, presentness, etc., which in fact *no term whatever* has or could have. This kind and degree of misprehension might, perhaps, be permitted by the principle which is vaguely stated and then interpreted in §591. But it seems quite clear that this statement and this interpretation are not equivalent to the principle which was carefully formulated in §514, correctly interpreted in §515, and accepted as self-evident.

So I cannot see that McTaggart has given any satisfactory account of the possibility of misprehension, a subject which is plainly of vital importance to his system. So unsatisfactory and incoherent do his statements seem to me that I cannot but suspect that I have failed to understand his doctrine on this point. If so, it is certainly not for want of prolonged and sympathetic reflection on his statements.

*Condition III.* The question whether McTaggart's general theory of error and *C*-series allows for the special forms of erroneous cognition which in fact exist is a question of detail. McTaggart defers it, and treats it in Chaps. LII to LVII, inclusive. We shall also defer it for detailed treatment in the next five chapters.

*Condition IV.* On McTaggart's theory, any *C*-series, like

any ostensible  $B$ -series, is one-dimensional. And its generating relation, like that of an ostensible  $B$ -series, is asymmetrical and transitive.

*Condition V.* The theory places no limitation on the number of terms in a  $C$ -series. Therefore it permits us to postulate in  $C$ -series at least as many terms as can be distinguished in ostensible  $B$ -series. Our theory will allow  $C$ -series to be compact, if that is necessary to save the appearances. But it will equally allow them to be discrete, if that is necessary.

*Condition VI.* The sixth condition is that the theory must allow for the apparently profound difference which exists between one's ordinary everyday prehensions and the  $\omega$ -prehensions which, according to McTaggart, form a complete set of parts of one's self. This raises considerable difficulties, which we will now illustrate.

Consider any  $\omega$ -prehension, e.g.,  $P_{12}$ . This is in fact endlessly differentiated into other  $\omega$ -prehensions, e.g., into  $P_{121}$  and  $P_{122}$ , into  $P_{1211}$ ,  $P_{1212}$ ,  $P_{1221}$ ,  $P_{1222}$ , and so on without end. The same is true of any self. Moreover, any pre-maximal term in a  $C$ -series, e.g.,  $P_{12}^r$ , will itself be endlessly divided into parts, such as  $P_{121}^r$ ,  $P_{122}^r$ , etc., which occupy corresponding positions in secondary  $C$ -series of higher grade. Now these pre-maximal terms are what appear, *sub specie temporis*, as  $P_1$ 's ordinary everyday cognitive states. Yet in ordinary life when a person prehends anything he certainly does notprehend it as having parts within parts without end. It is not merely that one fails toprehend as endlessly divided what is in fact so divided. Often one prehends such an object as *not* endlessly divided. Thus there is positive error, and not mere inadequacy, in prehension in such cases.

It was in order to deal with this that McTaggart introduced, in §542 of *The Nature of Existence*, the notion of "states of prehension" as a wider notion than "prehension", and added a footnote to emphasise the distinction. I have explained this fully in Sub-section 2.1 of Chap. xxxix p. 358 of the present work, where I distinguished, under the head of "states of prehension", the two sub-classes of "actual prehensions" and "prehension-components". The reader should refer back

to Diagrams 4 and 5 in that chapter. We must now consider the application of these notions to the present problem.

Suppose that, speaking in temporal terms, we say that  $P_1$  at a certain stage in his history prehends  $P_2$ , but prehends him as undifferentiated although he is in fact differentiated into the two parts  $P_{21}$  and  $P_{22}$ . The timeless facts underlying this appearance will be as follows. In the  $C$ -series  $\Pi_1$  there is a certain term  $P_1^r$ . This contains as a part a term  $P_{12}^r$  which occupies in  $\Pi_{12}$  the corresponding position to that which  $P_1^r$  occupies in  $\Pi_1$ .  $P_{12}^r$  is a misprehension in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ , and it appears *sub specie temporis* as occurring at a certain date in  $P_1$ 's history. Now  $P_{12}^r$  is itself composed of a set of parts  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{122}^r$ . These occupy in the series  $\Pi_{121}$  and  $\Pi_{122}$ , respectively, positions which correspond to each other and to the position occupied by  $P_1^r$  in  $\Pi_1$ . Now  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{122}^r$  must be supposed, in this case, to be, not actual prehensions, but *prehension-components* which together compose the state  $P_{12}^r$ , which is an actual but confused prehension of  $P_2$  as an undifferentiated whole.

What are we to say of this theory? We have already had to admit that prehensions can contain parts which are not prehensions. For they contain residues as parts, and these are not even prehension-components. If this be granted, there seems no reason to object to the hypothesis that a whole  $P_{12}^r$ , which is an *actual prehension* of a total object  $P_2$ , may have a set of parts,  $P_{121}^r$  and  $P_{122}^r$ , which are only *prehension-components* corresponding respectively to the parts  $P_{21}$  and  $P_{22}$  of the total object  $P_2$  and are not actual prehensions of those parts.

*Condition VII.* The theory allows for what is expressed in temporal language by saying that the same object may be contemplated continuously by a self throughout a finite period. As a matter of fact, what is presented to a self  $P_1$  by every term  $P_1^r$  of a primary  $C$ -series  $\Pi_1$  is one and the same group of particulars. For this total object consists of the selves which constitute  $P_1$ 's differentiating group taken as a collective whole. This identity in the total prehended object plainly suffices to account for *any* degree of persistence in the

object contemplated which may appear when  $P_1$ 's experience is regarded *sub specie temporis*. The element of variation which appears in  $P_1$ 's experience, when regarded *sub specie temporis*, is due to the fact that every pre-maximal term in the series  $\Pi_1$  is a state of partially erroneous prehension of the total object which is common to them all. Since the kind and degree of error vary from one term  $P_1^r$  to another term  $P_1^s$  of the series  $\Pi_1$ , there will be the appearance of  $P_1$  contemplating now this object and now that object, or believing now one proposition and now another proposition about the same or different subjects, and so on.

*Condition VIII.* We have next to deal with the appearance of oscillation and recurrence in  $P_1$ 's experience when the latter is misprehended as a temporal process. McTaggart discusses this in §§599 to 607, inclusive.

The first kind of oscillation to be considered is the apparent oscillation in the extent of  $P_1$ 's total cognitive field and in the degree of clearness with which this field *as a whole* is cognised. The question about clearness is discussed in §§599 to 602, inclusive. The argument is as follows.

Successive terms in a series  $\Pi_1$  differ from each other by containing greater and greater amounts of prehension in  $P_1$  of one and the same total object. This variation is always in the same direction, and therefore cannot by itself account for the appearance of oscillation in the course of time. But it is quite possible that an increase in the amount of  $P_1$ 's prehension of a given object may, at certain stages, be accompanied by an *increase*, and, at other stages, by a *decrease*, in the clearness of his prehension of that object. E.g., the residue of  $P_1^{r+1}$  without  $P_1^r$  might be of such a nature as to harmonise with the quality of  $P_1^r$ . In such a case  $P_1^{r+1}$  might be a clearer prehension in  $P_1$  of his differentiating group than  $P_1^r$  is. On the other hand, the residue of  $P_1^{r+2}$  without  $P_1^{r+1}$  might be of such a nature as to disharmonise with the quality of  $P_1^{r+1}$ . In such a case  $P_1^{r+2}$  might be a more confused prehension in  $P_1$  of his differentiating group than  $P_1^{r+1}$  is. Suppose now that two selves,  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ , have the same differentiating group. Then it is possible that the residue of  $P_1^{r+1}$  without  $P_1^r$



harmonises in quality with  $P_1^r$ , whilst the residue of  $P_2^{r+1}$  without  $P_2^r$  disharmonises in quality with  $P_2^r$ . If so, it will appear that  $P_1$ 's total cognitive state is increasing in clearness as a whole, whilst  $P_2$ 's total cognitive state is decreasing in clearness as a whole.

An extreme case of such oscillation in clearness of a self's cognitive state as a whole is provided by successive days of waking life and successive nights of dreamless sleep. If  $P_1$  really ceased to have any prehensions in what is called "dreamless sleep", we should have to say that the series  $\Pi_1$  contains no terms between that which appears as  $P_1$ 's latest state before going to sleep on a certain night and what appears as his earliest state on waking up again. This, however, would make it difficult to admit that there is *any* truth in such statements as that  $P_1$ 's watch was going or that  $P_2$  was lecturing whilst  $P_1$  was in a state of dreamless sleep. Yet such statements are almost certainly in many cases partly erroneous expressions of genuine facts. So McTaggart thinks that we must hold that there are terms of the series  $\Pi_1$  between the term which appears as  $P_1$ 's latest state before going to sleep on a certain night and that which appears as his earliest state after waking up from a period of dreamless sleep. And these terms must be states of prehension in  $P_1$  of his differentiating group taken as a single collective whole. There is no difficulty in supposing that these states of prehension are extremely confused; and this is why, speaking in temporal terms, it is true to say that  $P_1$  cannot remember them on waking.

McTaggart deals with the apparent oscillations in the *extent* of a self's cognitive field in §§ 603 and 604. This kind of oscillation takes two forms. (i) There is the apparent removal of certain objects from the total field and the apparent addition of certain objects to the total field as time goes on. At one time, e.g., when I look at a certain field I see a certain horse; at another time when I look at the same field I see it empty or with a cow in it. And so on. This presents a difficulty for the theory. For, according to it, the total object presented to a self  $P_1$  by every term of the primary series  $\Pi_1$  is one and the same, viz., his differentiating group as a whole; and it is the

terms of  $\Pi_1$  which appear *sub specie temporis* as the successive total states in  $P_1$ 's history.

(ii) The second form is this. Even when a person ostensibly continues toprehend or to think of a certain object, he appears sometimes to think of one phase in its history and sometimes of another. E.g., speaking in temporal terms, I might continue to think of Napoleon for a whole hour on end. But sometimes in that hour I might be thinking of the part of his history which coincided with the Battle of Jena, sometimes of the part which coincided with the Battle of Waterloo, and so on. This, again, presents a difficulty for the theory. According to it, *every* term of the secondary series  $\Pi_{12}$  is a prehension of *every* term of the series  $\Pi_2$ . Now the terms of  $\Pi_{12}$  appear *sub specie temporis* as successive states of prehension or as other kinds of cognitive state in  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ . And the terms of  $\Pi_2$  appear *sub specie temporis* as successive total phases in the history of  $P_2$ .

McTaggart deals with these difficulties by means of the distinction, among states of prehension, between actual prehensions and prehension-components. Suppose that, in temporal language, we say that  $P_2$  comes into  $P_1$ 's cognitive field, stays there for a time, and then goes out again. The fact underlying these appearances is of the following kind. Suppose that  $P_1$ 's differentiating group consists of  $P_1$ ,  $P_2$ , and  $P_3$ . Then any term  $P_1^r$  in the primary series  $\Pi_1$  will have a set of three parts, viz.,  $P_{11}^r$ ,  $P_{12}^r$ , and  $P_{13}^r$ . Now consider any more inclusive term  $P_1^s$  in  $\Pi_1$ . It will also have a set of three parts, viz.,  $P_{11}^s$ ,  $P_{12}^s$ , and  $P_{13}^s$ . Now suppose that the terms in  $\Pi_{12}$  which come *between*  $P_{12}^r$  and  $P_{12}^s$  are actual prehensions, whilst the terms in  $\Pi_{12}$  which *immediately precede*  $P_{12}^r$  and those which *immediately follow*  $P_{12}^s$  are only prehension-components. (Here "precede" means "are less inclusive than" and "follow" means "are more inclusive than".) Then the appearances will be accounted for in terms of the theory.

In order to deal satisfactorily with the second case it is desirable to use the notation which I introduced on pp. 380 to 382 of the present work, which the reader will find illustrated in Diagram 6 on p. 381. In any term  $P_{12}^r$  of

$\Pi_{12}$  we distinguished factors  $P_{12}^{r1}, P_{12}^{r2}, \dots P_{12}^{rr}, \dots P_{12}^{rs}, \dots P_{12}^{r\omega}$ , corresponding respectively to the terms  $P_2^1, P_2^2, \dots P_2^r, \dots P_2^s, \dots P_2^\omega$  of the series  $\Pi_2$ . Now some of these factors must be supposed to be actual prehensions, and the rest of them to be only prehension-components. Let us suppose, e.g., that the only factor in  $P_{12}^r$  which is an actual prehension is  $P_{12}^{rs}$ . How would this timeless fact manifest itself *sub specie temporis*? It would appear as follows. At a certain stage of  $P_1$ 's ostensible history there would appear to be a thought in him of a certain one phase in  $P_2$ 's ostensible history, and there would then appear to be no thought or prehension of any other phase in  $P_2$ 's ostensible history. It is evident that the second kind of oscillation could easily be explained along these lines.

*Condition IX.* Obviously the same kind of explanation will account for the apparent increases and decreases in the clearness with which a self cognises a certain particular object. Such changes seem to be due sometimes to changes in the observer's mind, e.g., diversion of his attention; sometimes to changes in the object, e.g., to its moving away; and sometimes to changes in some third thing, e.g., the observer's body or the medium surrounding it.

Now the general principle is this.  $P_{12}^{r+1}$  will be clearer or more confused than  $P_{12}^r$  according as the quality of the increment by which  $P_{12}^{r+1}$  differs from  $P_{12}^r$  harmonises or disharmonises with the quality of  $P_{12}^r$ . Now it is evident that the quality of  $P_{12}^r$  will depend partly on the nature of  $P_1$  and partly on that of  $P_2$ , since it is a prehension *in*  $P_1$  of  $P_2$ . Again, the nature of  $P_2$  will include its relational properties, and therefore such properties as that of standing in the relation  $R$  to another particular  $P_3$ . Some of these relational properties of  $P_2$  may be relevant to the qualities of  $P_{12}^r$ . Thus we can see that the greater or less confusion of  $P_{12}^{r+1}$  as compared with  $P_{12}^r$  will always depend on certain characteristics of  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ , and may depend on the relations of  $P_1$  or  $P_2$  to other things such as  $P_3$ . In any particular case one of these influences may be predominant and the rest trivial. This timeless dependence of clearness and confusion on such characteristics may appear as a causal determination of clearness or confusion by events. So the theory can account for the

fact that ostensible changes in the clearness with which a self cognises a given object are ostensibly due, sometimes to changes in the self, sometimes to changes in the object, and sometimes to changes in the self's body or other things.

*Condition X.* Ostensible oscillations in the accuracy of a self's cognitions of a given object can be explained in terms of the theory on the same general principles as have been used to explain ostensible oscillations in the extent and the clearness of its cognition.

*Condition XI.* This is the condition that there shall be enough systematic connexion between differences in the nature of terms in *C*-series and differences in their position in their series to account for the appearance of there being causal laws connecting *events* of one kind with contemporary and subsequent events of certain other kinds. Obviously there is nothing in the theory to conflict with this condition.

*Condition XII.* This is the condition that no set of parts of a correct prehension can contain as members more than one incorrect state of prehension in the same self of the same object. Obviously the theory fulfils this condition, since it was made up with it explicitly in view.

Before bringing this chapter to an end it seems worth while to point out a remarkable resemblance between McTaggart's theory and Leibniz's. On Leibniz's theory every monad perceives all the other monads from its own point of view. Thus the total object of any monad's cognition is the same at all times. The apparent differences between the extent of a monad's cognitive field at one time and another, or between the cognitive fields of two different monads, would be explained by differences in the degree and distribution of clearness and confusion. The points of unlikeness between the two theories, which are relevant for our purpose, are the following. For McTaggart the total object of any self is its differentiating group. This need not include all the selves in the universe. So the total objects of two selves may be different. Again, for Leibniz there really is change in the monads; whilst, for McTaggart, there are only qualitative differences among the timeless terms of *C*-series, which are misperhended as the histories of selves.



## CHAPTER XLIV

### OSTENSIBLE SENSА AND OSTENSIBLE MATTER

We have now to consider Condition III, viz., that the general theory of Error and *C*-series must allow of the particular kinds of error which, according to the rest of the system, do in fact exist. The errors may be divided into two classes, viz., non-introspective and introspective. It is, e.g., a non-introspective error to misprehend a particular as a sensum. It is an introspective error to misprehend one of one's own experiences as a state of judging or supposing. We will begin with non-introspective errors. These reduce to the errors of ostensible sensation and those of ostensible sense-perception. In ostensible sensation certain particulars which we prehend are misprehended as having sensible qualities and relations. In ostensible sense-perception we not only misprehend certain particulars as sensa but we also uncritically mistake them for appearances of presently existing material things or events.

McTaggart deals with this question in Chap. LII of *The Nature of Existence*. According to him, neither of these errors conflicts with the general theory. Granted that misprehension is possible, there is no reason why it should not take the form of misprehending certain particulars, which are in fact purely spiritual, as having sensible qualities which do not and could not belong to anything. Again, perceptual acceptance of propositions about the present existence, qualities, and relations of material things and events, which is the additional factor that distinguishes sense-perception from mere sensation, is of the nature of ostensible *judging*. And, although these propositions are not in fact accepted as a result of a process of ostensible inference, the acceptance of them can be challenged and could then be defended only by such a process. And this process would be found to be invalid. Now

no one has any difficulty in admitting that there can be false ostensible judgments, which, when we try to defend them, commit us to invalid ostensible inferences.

It is true that, on McTaggart's theory, these ostensible judgments and ostensible inferences are really prehensions introspectively misprehended as discursive cognitions. But the question whether such introspective misprehension of one's own cogitations is compatible with the general theory is a further question, which will be treated in its own place. At present we are concerned only with the prior question whether it is compatible with the general theory that these non-introspective cogitations should be erroneous in the ways in which McTaggart claims to have shown them to be. And the answer is that there is no incompatibility.

The rest of the chapter is devoted to the following general epistemological question. If a person ostensibly thinks of a certain set of characteristics as constituting a description of an object, does it follow that there *is* an object answering to this description? Granted that, in many cases, no such object is or could be *existent*, must such an object be *real* in all such cases? McTaggart is, no doubt, thinking of Meinong in this discussion. In the particular case of ostensible sensation the question would come to this. Granted that I am now prehending an object as red and square, e.g., and granted that there can be no red or square *existents*, does it follow that there must, nevertheless, be a real *non-existent* red square object? McTaggart rightly answers this question in the negative.

He thinks that the mistaken belief that there must be such an object may have arisen in the following way. (i) It is assumed that, if I cogitate (and particularly if I prehend) an object as answering to a certain description, then an object answering to this description must be a *constituent* of my experience of cogitating. And "constituent" means at least "part", whatever else it may mean in this connexion. (ii) This conviction arises through a confusion. A certain cogitation might properly be described by such a phrase as "a cogitation of an object as having the characteristics X, Y, and Z". Now this *description* of the cogitation does contain the *phrase* "an

object having the characteristics *X*, *Y*, and *Z*". From this people jump to the conclusion that the *cogitation itself* must contain *something answering to the description* "an object having the characteristics *X*, *Y*, and *Z*". Obviously this transition is invalid.

Moreover, it is easy to see that the belief which is reached by this invalid process cannot be true. The cogitation is existent and is spiritual. If there were an object answering to the cogitated description, it would, by hypothesis, be non-existent. And, in many cases, it would be material or sensal. But no part of a spiritual whole could be material or sensal. And every part of an existent whole must itself be existent.

## CHAPTER XLV

### OSTENSIBLE PREHENSIONS

When a person introspects his experiences he correctly prehends some of them as prehensions whilst he misprehends some of them as non-prehensive cogitations, such as states of judging. In this chapter we shall be concerned with those experiences which, if introspected, are correctly prehended as prehensions, i.e., with *ostensible* prehensions.

In so far as an experience is prehended as a prehension it is prehended correctly. Nevertheless, such experiences are introspectively misprehended in at least three respects. (i) They appear to be temporal. (ii) They appear to be correct, though they are all in fact partly erroneous. And (iii) those which are prehended as later appear to exclude those which are prehended as earlier, though in fact the former include the latter. Can these misprehensions be reconciled with the general theory?

McTaggart discusses this question in Chap. LIII, and concludes that there is no difficulty. (i) Certainly we cannot explain why *anything* should appear to be temporal when in fact nothing is or could be so. But, granted that it is an ultimate fact that certain non-temporal particulars do appear to be temporal when prehended, there is no special difficulty in the fact that ostensible prehensions appear to be temporal when introspected. (ii) The fact that every ostensible prehension appears correct to its owner at the time when he is making it, though really it is partially incorrect, is no more paradoxical than the admitted fact that every ostensible judgment appears true to the judging self at the time when he is making it, though many of them are really false. (iii) It is true that there is nothing in the introspective appearances to suggest that ostensibly later prehensions contain ostensibly earlier ones. And it is true that the appearance of persistence,



recurrence, and oscillation seem *prima facie* to conflict with this relationship. But it has been shown in Chap. XLIII of the present work that these appearances can be reconciled with the general theory.

McTaggart devotes the rest of the chapter to the following question. Since all our experiences are *really* states of prehension, whilst only some of them are *ostensibly* so, can we find any factor common and peculiar to ostensible prehensions which explains why they appear, on introspection, in a less distorted form than the others?

The most striking difference is the following. A self can make ostensible judgments or suppositions about everything which it can ostensiblyprehend. But the converse is not true. It cannot ostensiblyprehend everything about which it can make ostensible judgments and suppositions. If we go into detail, we find that the limitations on ostensible prehension are as follows: (i) Anything that can be ostensiblyprehended must be an actual particular. But a person can make ostensible judgments or suppositions about objects which are (a) real, but not particulars, e.g., the number 2, or (b) admittedly unreal, e.g., the King of the Fairies or the ratio whose square is equal to the ratio of 2 to 1. (ii) Anything that is ostensiblyprehended must, *sub specie temporis*, fall into the same specious present as the ostensible prehension of it. But ostensible judgments and suppositions are not limited in this way. A person can make them about objects which are, *sub specie temporis*, past or future when he does so. And, as we have already remarked, he can make them about ostensibly non-temporal objects, such as numbers.

It seems almost certain that there is always a closer connexion between subject and object where the former has an ostensible prehension of the latter than where he has only ostensibly non-prehensive cogitation of it. This would account for the much narrower range of ostensible prehension. McTaggart suggests that this more intimate connexion may make those prehensions in which it exists so much more forcible than others that they cannot be introspectively misprehended as non-prehensive cogitations. I am not greatly

impressed with this last suggestion. The most forcible and arresting objects of *non-introspective* cogitation are certain ostensible sensa, e.g., ostensible loud sudden noises, ostensible dazzling flashes, and so on. Now, if McTaggart is right, we misprehend them in sensation just as much as we misprehend less impressive objects. Therefore I see no reason to think that special force and impressiveness in an object of *introspection* would make it specially *unlikely* to be introspectively misprehended.

Now, if the general theory of Time and Error be correct, the temporal limitation of ostensible prehension to objects in the same specious present certainly is a sign of a specially close connexion between prehension and prehensum. For what appears, *sub specie temporis*, as occurrence in the same specious present, is, *sub specie aeternitatis*, the occupation by the prehension and the prehensum of corresponding positions in their respective *C*-series. We must note, however, that this cannot be the complete and sufficient condition for a prehension to be ostensible. For (a) this condition is often fulfilled without there being an ostensible prehension, as, e.g., in the case of my being unable to have an ostensible prehension of the contents of a closed book which is, *sub specie temporis*, now in my bookcase. And (b) a person may have an ostensible prehension of an object *as so-and-so* and at the same time make an ostensible judgment *that* this object is so and so. Here the condition of occupying corresponding positions in their respective *C*-series must be fulfilled, not only by the ostensible prehension and the object, but also by the ostensible judgment and the object. We shall consider this latter case in the next chapter.

There is one other difficulty, which McTaggart mentions in §636. It is as follows. *All* pre-maximal terms of any secondary *C*-series are partly erroneous states of prehension. For, even if they had no other defect, they all present their objects as temporal. But some ostensible judgments, which, *sub specie temporis*, occur in the course of a person's history, are absolutely true. McTaggart, e.g., would hold that his own ostensible judgment that every particular has parts

within parts without end in at least one dimension is absolutely true. Now might it not be suspected that an absolutely true ostensible judgment would be more closely connected with its object than any partly erroneous ostensible prehension would be connected with *its* object? This question must also be deferred to the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XLVI

### OSTENSIBLE JUDGMENTS

McTaggart deals with ostensible judgments in Chap. LIV of *The Nature of Existence*. The discussion, which is very elaborate, falls into two main divisions. (1) A general account of the resemblances and differences between ostensible judgments and prehensions. This includes a sub-division of ostensible judgments into two classes, which he calls "Existential" and "Non-existential". (2) A discussion of the following two questions about each class of ostensible judgments. (i) Does any ostensible judgment of the class convey any information (true or false) which could not be conveyed by a prehension? (ii) Can an ostensible judgment which is completely true or one which is completely false—and there are ostensible judgments of both kinds—really be a pre-maximal prehension, in view of the fact that all such prehensions are partly correct and partly incorrect? We will take these topics in turn.

#### 1. General Account of Ostensible Judgments and Prehensions.

(i) Our only ground for believing that there are judgments is that some of our experiences, if introspected, seem to be judgments. Now, if it is admitted that *non-reflexive* prehensions, such as visual sensations, can present their objects as having characteristics, such as colour and extension, which are delusive, it cannot be denied off-hand that *reflexive* prehensions might mispresent no less seriously the experiences which are their objects.

(ii) It might, perhaps, be objected that the proposition that there are no judgments cannot be consistently held by anyone, because anyone who held it would *ipso facto* be making a judgment. McTaggart rightly rejects this contention. If the proposition that there are no judgments be true,



two things do, no doubt, follow. (a) Anyone who would commonly be said to be "believing" it is having an experience which is really a prehension and not a judgment. And (b) this prehension would appear to him, if he introspected it, as a judgment and not as a prehension. But these consequences can be admitted without either contradicting the original proposition or embarking on a vicious infinite regress. There is, then, no insuperable *prima facie* objection to the doctrine that ostensible judgments are really misprehended prehensions.

(iii) All ostensible judgments "give information" to the judging self, and this information may be true or false. This, I think, is merely another way of saying that every judgment refers to a certain fact, and is true or false according as it concords or discords with the fact to which it refers. Prehensions also "give information", which may be true or false. For, whenever a self prehends anything, he *ipso facto* prehends it as having a certain characteristic. If it has this characteristic, the information is correct; if it has not this characteristic, the information is incorrect.

Now in some cases precisely the same information is supplied, though in a different way, by an ostensible prehension and by an ostensible judgment. This happens, e.g., if a person prehends a particular as manifesting squeakiness, and ostensibly makes a judgment which would be expressed by saying "That is a manifestation of squeakiness." Suppose that he ostensibly makes the perceptual judgment which would be expressed by saying "That is a squeaky noise." Then a part, but by no means all, of the information which is supplied by the ostensible judgment is also supplied by the ostensible prehension. We must admit, then, that at least *some* of the information which is supplied by ostensible judgments could be supplied by prehensions.

(iv) No ostensible judgment supplies the whole truth about its subject; but this does not prevent some ostensible judgments from being wholly true. We have seen in Section 1 of Chap. xxxvi p. 329 of the present work that, if anyone believed that no ostensible judgment is completely true, it would necessarily follow that his belief is false. We have also seen that it is

quite certain that there are ostensible judgments which are completely false. Now every prehension except those which are *maximal* end-terms of *C*-series are partly correct and partly incorrect. On the other hand, every ostensible judgment which, *sub specie temporis*, has been made in the course of the world's history must be a *pre-maximal* term in a *C*-series if it is a prehension at all. Therefore we are faced with the following question. Could an ostensible judgment which is completely true, or one which is completely false, really be a prehension which is partly correct and partly incorrect? Unless it can be such a prehension, there must be some ostensible judgments which are not prehensions at all. In that case the "first table" of McTaggart's decalogue would collide with the "second table" and both would be smashed.

(v) In § 641 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart says that ostensible judgments "can be divided into those which do and those which do not assert existence". And he proposes to call the former "Existential Judgments". The distinction is very carelessly stated, and the name is highly inappropriate. One would imagine that McTaggart had in mind judgments like "Lions exist", "Dragons do not exist", and so on. These do "assert existence" or deny it and they are often called "Existential Judgments" by logicians, though Johnson's term "Instantial Judgments" is preferable. But the subsequent discussion shows that McTaggart is not thinking of such judgments at all. He is thinking of judgments in which a quality is ascribed to one or more particulars or a relation is asserted to hold between two or more particulars. The particulars may be prehended and called by a logically proper name; as when a person judges, with regard to a sensible which he is sensing at the time, that it is a manifestation of redness. On the other hand, they are very often cogitated only descriptively by means of characteristics, as when a person at the present day judges that Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon. I think that the judgments which McTaggart has in mind when he talks of "existential judgments" could properly be described as "Categorical Judgments about Particulars".

In §654 it is definitely stated that "Non-existential Judgments" are all judgments to the effect that certain characteristics do or do not intrinsically determine certain other characteristics. So they could properly be called "Judgments about the Intrinsic Connexion of Universals". I propose to substitute these terms for McTaggart's. It will, however, be convenient in the subsequent discussion to call them respectively "*p*-Judgments" and "*u*-Judgments".

## 2. Can ostensible *p*-Judgments be Prehensions?

Ostensible *p*-judgments cannot be prehensions unless both the following conditions are fulfilled: (i) All the information supplied by any ostensible *p*-judgment can also be supplied by prehensions. And (ii) a completely true or a completely false *p*-judgment can be, or be contained in, a prehension which is partly correct and partly incorrect. We have, therefore, to ask whether these two conditions can be fulfilled. We will take them in turn.

2.1. *The first Condition.* Prehensions are like ostensible *p*-judgments in the following respect. The information which they supply is about the qualities of, or the relations between, certain particulars. They differ from ostensible *p*-judgments in the following respects. (a) Though they supply information about the qualities of particulars or the relations between particulars, they do this in a quite peculiar way. We may express the difference by saying that a prehension *presents* a particular *as* qualified or related in a certain manner, whilst an ostensible *p*-judgment *ascribes* a quality *to* a particular or *asserts* a relation *between* two or more particulars. (b) The particular or particulars which an ostensible *p*-judgment is about are often cogitated only through a description in terms of characteristics; but a prehension presents the prehended particular as such and directly.

Now we know that, in spite of these differences, information which is supplied by ostensible *p*-judgments *can be* supplied by prehensions. For we have an actual instance of this in the case of sensing a sensible as manifesting a certain sensible characteristic and judging that it has that characteristic. In

§650 McTaggart suggests that, in such cases, there is really only one cogitation, viz., the prehension. This is introspectively prehended in two ways at once, viz., correctly as a prehension and incorrectly as a judgment which supplies the same information as the prehension.

McTaggart concludes that there is nothing in the information supplied by ostensible *p*-judgments to cast doubt on the principle that all such ostensible judgments are in fact prehensions which are introspectively misprehended.

At this point two comments seem to be called for. (i) Let us grant, for the moment, that a singular ostensible *p*-judgment in which a certain characteristic is ascribed to a *prehended* particular might be identical with a prehension of that particular as having that characteristic. It is admitted that most ostensible *p*-judgments are not of this nature. In most of them the logical subject is not prehended, but is cogitated as answering to a certain description in terms of characteristics. The jump from such ostensible *p*-judgments as "This is a sensible manifestation of squakiness" to such ostensible *p*-judgments as "Messalina poisoned Claudius with a mushroom" is enormous. All that we *know* is that no information is supplied by ostensible *p*-judgments of the former kind which is not also supplied by prehensions. On this ground, and on it alone, we are asked to admit that no information is supplied by ostensible *p*-judgments of the latter kind which is not also supplied by prehensions. Is there any justification for making this tremendous extrapolation from this very narrow basis of known fact?

McTaggart never attempts to give any specific justification for extending his principle to descriptive ostensible *p*-judgments. His only special reference to them is in §643, where he assumes the extension to be admitted, and contents himself with raising the following question of detail. Granted that a descriptive ostensible *p*-judgment is really a prehension, some of the characteristics which the object is prehended as having will go to constitute the description of the logical subject, whilst others of them will go to form the logical predicate. What conditions determine that some of the



prehended characteristics shall play one part and that others shall play the other part when the prehension is misprehended as a *p*-judgment? His answer is the obvious one that there are three alternative places in which the conditions may be located. Certain prehended characteristics may enter into the description of the logical subject when the prehension is misprehended as a descriptive *p*-judgment, either (a) because they are specially interconnected in the *prehended object*, or (b) because some factor in the *prehension* associates them more intimately with each other than with the rest, or (c) because some factor in the *reflexive misprehension* of this prehension as a *p*-judgment produces such a selective association. Of course any two, or all three, of these conditions might co-exist and co-operate.

(ii) The suggestion that one and the same experience, which is in fact a prehension and not a judgment, is at one and the same time prehended by its owner *correctly* as a prehension and *incorrectly* as a judgment, is very hard to swallow. We must remember that McTaggart assumes without question that the characteristics of being a judgment and being a prehension are incompatible. If they were compatible, his only reason for denying that there can be judgments would vanish. For then experiences which are judgments could also be prehensions, and they could be endlessly divisible in respect of the latter characteristic, which is all that he requires. Thus, to prehend one and the same experience as at once a judgment and a prehension must be to prehend it as having two characteristics which, according to McTaggart, should be as obviously incompatible as, e.g., being extended and being spiritual are on his view. Have we any reason to think that we can do this, and do it too without the least intellectual discomfort? The only alternative is to say that, instead of prehending a single experience as having two obviously incompatible characteristics, we misprehend it as *two* experiences, one of which has one of the characteristics and the other of which has the other. Somewhat similar suggestions have been put forward by extreme realists in connexion with the "double images" which appear when a

person looks at an object and squints. I do not think that McTaggart has ever suggested that misprehension could take the form of misprehending one particular as two particulars. Yet I suspect that his present suggestion would commit him to reflexive misprehension of this kind.

2.2. *The second Condition.* Can a prehension which is partly correct and partly incorrect appear to be a completely true or a completely false *p*-judgment? McTaggart discusses this question in §§ 644 to 651, inclusive. He puts forward a theory of his own to explain how this condition can be fulfilled, and he argues for it; then he considers and rejects an alternative theory.

I will now state McTaggart's suggestion in my own words. Whenever an experience is introspectively prehended as a judgment it is *ipso facto* prehended as a judgment whose "content" is so-and-so, i.e., as a judgment *that* so-and-so. The information supplied by an ostensible judgment is simply the content which a certain experience is prehended as having when that experience is introspectively prehended as a judgment. Now any prehension also has content, since it is a prehension of a particular *as* having such and such characteristics. The information supplied by a prehension simply is the content of that prehension. Let us call the content which a prehension is introspectively prehended as having when it is introspectively prehended as a judgment "propositional content"; and let us call the content which a prehension in fact has "prehensional content". The propositional content which a prehension is *prehended as having*, when it is prehended as a judgment, is correlated with the prehensional content which it *in fact has* whether it is prehended as a judgment or not. Now McTaggart's suggestion is that the *propositional* content which a prehension *appears* to have when it is misprehended as a judgment always omits some part of the *prehensional* content which this prehension *really has*.

Now suppose that  $P(O)$  is a prehension of an object  $O$  which correctly presents  $O$  as having the characteristic  $X$  and mispresents  $O$  as having the characteristic  $Y$ . Suppose that

$P' [P (O)]$  is an introspective misprehension of  $P (O)$  as a judgment. If we accept McTaggart's suggestion, we know that the propositional content which  $P (O)$  is prehended as having when it is misprehended as a judgment will omit *some* part of prehensional content which  $P (O)$  in fact has. Suppose that  $P' [P (O)]$  presents  $P (O)$  as a judgment that  $O$  has  $X$ , and fails to present  $P (O)$  as a judgment that  $O$  has  $Y$ . In that case  $P (O)$  is misprehended as a judgment having a certain propositional content which is in fact completely true, in spite of the fact that  $P (O)$ 's prehensional content is partly incorrect. Suppose, on the other hand, that  $P' [P (O)]$  presents  $P (O)$  as a judgment that  $O$  has  $Y$ , and fails to present  $P (O)$  as a judgment that  $O$  has  $X$ . In that case  $P (O)$  is misprehended as a judgment having a certain propositional content which is in fact completely false, in spite of the fact that  $P (O)$ 's prehensional content is partly correct.

I think that the above is a fair account of McTaggart's theory. In §645 he points out that this systematic explanation of how a completely true ostensible judgment could be identical with a partly incorrect prehension must be carefully distinguished from cases in which the same result might arise through a peculiar concatenation of circumstances. Suppose that  $O$  is characterised by  $X$  and not by  $Y$ ; and suppose that  $P (O)$  misrepresents  $O$  as having  $Y$ , and does not present  $O$  as having  $X$ . If  $P (O)$  is introspectively prehended as a judgment, it must be to some extent misprehended. It is logically possible that a misprehension of  $O$  as having  $Y$  might be introspectively misprehended as a judgment that  $O$  has  $X$ . The conjunction of this reflexive misprehension with this non-reflexive misprehension would have produced a completely correct ostensible judgment. But it is plain that, if this should ever happen, it is just a remarkable coincidence.

As McTaggart points out in §646, the theory which he has suggested involves, *sub specie temporis*, that each of us has at any moment a much wider range of cognition (true or false) than he can recognise by introspection or retrospection. There is, however, nothing contradictory in this, and nothing even paradoxical.

In §§650 and 651 McTaggart considers cases where, *sub specie temporis*, a person has at the same time an ostensible prehension of an object and an ostensible judgment about it. These fall into three classes. (a) The characteristics which the object is ostensibly judged to have may be included among those which it is ostensibly prehended as having. (b) The two sets of characteristics may have no members in common, but there may be no incompatibility between the members of one set and those of the other. McTaggart gives as an example that George Washington might at a certain moment ostensiblyprehend himself as in pain and ostensibly judge that the first President of the United States will be remembered in history. (c) The object may be ostensibly prehended as having characteristics which are incompatible with those which it is then ostensibly judged to have. Thus, e.g., McTaggart must at some times in his life have sensed certain particulars as extended and coloured and have ostensibly judged that they were in fact purely spiritual entities.

McTaggart holds that, in the first two cases, it is reasonable to suppose that there is only one prehension, and that this is introspectively prehended both as a prehension and as a judgment. I have already pointed out the serious difficulties which there are in any such view, even when applied to the first case. I should have thought that it had hardly any plausibility at all as applied to the second case. The reader can judge for himself after reflecting on McTaggart's example about George Washington.

We come now to the third case, which McTaggart discusses in §651. He holds that the ostensible judgment and the ostensible prehension can be one and the same experience even here. Suppose that a person ostensibly prehends *O* as having *X* and ostensibly judges that it has not *X*. McTaggart's suggestion is that this person is prehending *O* both as having *X* and as having a certain other characteristic *Y* which he prehends as *excluding X*. This single total prehension is then introspectively prehended as a prehension of *O* as having *X* and a simultaneous judgment that *O* has not *X*.

Even if this theory be correct so far as it goes, it leaves one



important fact unexplained. Of two characteristics, *X* and *Y*, e.g., being extended and being spiritual, one is *ostensibly* prehended as qualifying a certain object and the other is *not ostensibly* prehended as qualifying it. Now *both X* and *Y* are *in fact* prehended as qualifying this object *O*. And the relation of incompatibility in which they are prehended as standing to each other is *symmetrical*. What determines that the prehension of *O* as characterised by *X*, e.g., should appear as such, whilst the prehension of *O* as characterised by *Y* and of *Y* as incompatible with *X* should appear only as a judgment that *O* is not characterised by *X*? How does this asymmetrical result emerge from these symmetrical conditions?

It might be answered that the asymmetry needed in the conditions is supplied by the fact that *O* actually has one of the characteristics and has not the other. I do not think that this would be satisfactory, for two reasons. (i) *O* is *prehended* by the person concerned as having both characteristics. Now it is hard to believe that a mere *de facto* asymmetry, which the subject knows nothing about either wittingly or unwittingly, in the relation between the object and two characteristics, could account for the asymmetry in the subject's cognitive state. (ii) Even if this general objection be waived, the way in which this asymmetry works out in detail is highly paradoxical. For the characteristic which *O* is *ostensibly* prehended as having is generally the one which it *does not* in fact have. Thus, e.g., sensibilia are ostensibly prehended as coloured and extended, which they are not; and are not ostensibly prehended as spiritual, which they are. Surely one would have expected the exact opposite of this.

Turning now to McTaggart's general explanation of how a prehension which is partly correct and partly incorrect could be prehended as a judgment which is completely true or as a judgment which is completely false, I would make the following comment. The theory seems to presuppose that the content of a prehension which is partly correct and partly incorrect is a kind of mechanical mixture of wholly correct and wholly incorrect information. The object is prehended as having the characteristics *X*, *Y*, and *Z*; it really has *X* and *Y*,

and it does not have *Z*. I should have thought it quite certain that, if there is misprehension at all, most prehensions which are partly correct and partly incorrect cannot be brought under this simple formula. E.g., if a particular is prehended as spatio-temporal, these characteristics enter into almost every other characteristic that it can be prehended as having. Its apparent colour, e.g., is spread over its apparent area, and its apparent area is marked out by the colour which is spread over it.

It remains to mention an alternative theory which McTaggart suggests in §648 and rejects in §649. This assumes that there are pre-maximal prehensions which are perfectly correct, so far as they go, but are inadequate. When one of them is introspectively prehended as a judgment with a certain content, the propositional content which it is prehended as having may omit nothing of the prehensional content which it actually has. And, since the prehensional content which it actually has is wholly correct, there is no difficulty in admitting that the propositional content which it is prehended as having when it is misprehended as a judgment is wholly true.

McTaggart rejects this theory on three grounds. (i) It cannot be extended from ostensible *p*-judgments to ostensible *u*-judgments, whilst his theory can be. (ii) Although it gets rid of a certain amount of misprehension, it leaves us with as much *reflexive* misprehension as before, since we have still to hold that prehensions are introspectively misprehended as judgments. And it leaves an immense amount of *non-reflexive* misprehension also. (iii) It introduces an awkward complication into the general theory of *C*-series, since it would force us to hold that, among pre-final prehensions which occupy corresponding positions in their respective *C*-series, some are both inadequate and partly incorrect whilst others are inadequate but wholly correct.

### 3. Can ostensible *u*-Judgments be Prehensions?

We must now raise the same two questions about ostensible *u*-judgments as we have already raised and answered about ostensible *p*-judgments. McTaggart asserts in §660 that there is no need for a special discussion of the second

question. In order to see that all the information which is conveyed by any ostensible *u*-judgment can be conveyed by prehensions, it is necessary to undertake a special enquiry; for the argument which was used to prove this conclusion about ostensible *p*-judgments cannot be applied to ostensible *u*-judgments without considerable modifications. But, granted that the first question can be answered satisfactorily for ostensible *u*-judgments, there is no need to develop a special argument in order to answer the second. The explanation of how a prehension which is partly correct and partly incorrect can be prehended as a judgment which is completely true or as one that is completely false can be transferred *mutatis mutandis* from ostensible *p*-judgments to ostensible *u*-judgments.

The following remark will suffice by way of comment on this contention. I have pointed out that McTaggart's account of how a prehension which is partly correct and partly incorrect can be prehended as a completely true *p*-judgment is most plausible when the latter takes the specially simple form of an inspective judgment, like "This manifests squeakiness", where the speaker uses "This" as a logically proper name for a sensible which he is sensing. The explanation becomes less and less plausible, even for ostensible *p*-judgments, as they depart further from this very simple and trivial and rather uncommon type. Now the explanation would certainly be less plausible, when applied to ostensible *u*-judgments, than it is when applied to the least favourable instances of ostensible *p*-judgments.

Let us now consider whether all the information which is conveyed by any ostensible *u*-judgment could be conveyed by prehensions. All ostensible *u*-judgments assert or deny of one characteristic *X* that its presence entails, or that it excludes, the presence of a certain other characteristic *Y*. There are two cases to be considered. (i) It may be that both *X* and *Y* have been ostensibly manifested to the person who makes the ostensible *u*-judgment. If, e.g., he ostensibly judges that having shape involves being extended, this will be an example. (ii) It may be that one or both of the charac-

teristics has never been ostensibly manifested to the person who makes the ostensible *u*-judgment. Suppose, e.g., that he makes the ostensible judgment that a moving body *subject to no forces* would continue to move for ever uniformly in a straight line. McTaggart deals with the first class of ostensible *u*-judgments in § 654. In §§ 655 to 659, inclusive, he tries to show that his theory can be extended to the second class. We will take the two in turn.

(i) The fundamental premise of McTaggart's theory is that, in prehending particulars, we get information not only about the characteristics of the prehended particulars but also about the characteristics of these characteristics. He tries to show this by such examples as the following.

Of two particulars *A* and *B*, both of which I prehend as visual sensa, I might make the ostensible judgment "The colour of *A* is nearer to pure redness than that of *B*, but it is less intense than that of *B*." This kind of ostensible judgment, he contends, ascribes characteristics not to *A* and *B* themselves but to a certain characteristic, viz., colour, which *A* and *B* are prehended as having. And it is certain that the information conveyed by such ostensible judgments is derived from ostensible prehension. Unless I sensed *A* and *B* as coloured in certain specific ways, I could not make this ostensible judgment about the characteristics of their ostensible colours.

Now, if a characteristic *X* is so related to a characteristic *Y* that the presence of the former in any particular entails the presence of the latter in that particular, this is a relational property of *X*. It is the property of *conveying Y*. Therefore, in prehending an object *O* as characterised by *X*, a person may prehend *X* as having the relational property of conveying *Y*. Suppose now that he introspectively misprehends as a judgment his prehension of *O* as characterised by *X*-which-conveys-*Y*. On McTaggart's general principles the propositional content which the prehension is *prehended as having* when it is misprehended as a judgment always omits part of the prehensional content which it *actually has*. His suggestion is that, when a prehension is misprehended as a



*u*-judgment, everything in its prehensional content is omitted except the information that *X* conveys *Y*. So it is misprehended as a judgment that *X* conveys *Y*. Of course, this judgment, like any other, may be false. For the prehension of *O* as characterised by *X*-which-conveys-*Y* may be a misprehension; *X* may not really have the characteristic of conveying *Y*.

I will now comment on this theory of McTaggart's. It seems to me that the admitted facts on which he builds this immense super-structure are all of the following kind. Two particulars are ostensibly prehended as manifestations of the same determinable sensible quality, e.g., as auditory sensa. This determinable has several "degrees of freedom", such as pitch, loudness, and tone-quality. (See Vol. I, p. 116, of the present work.) What McTaggart offers as examples of ostensible judgments about characteristics of characteristics, based on ostensible prehensions of particulars as having those characteristics, are all of the following kind. They are comparisons of prehended particulars, which both manifest such a common sensible determinable, in respect of the various degrees of freedom of that determinable. Thus, e.g., a typical ostensible judgment of the kind would be "This is of the same pitch as that, but it is louder; and it has the tone-quality of a note played on a violin, whilst that has the tone-quality of a note played on a piano." It is true that such judgments can be so expressed that the grammatical subject of the sentence is the name of a quality. We can say "The colour of this is brighter than the colour of that and nearer to pure redness" instead of saying "This is brighter than that and more nearly pure red." But the fact remains that we are comparing prehended *particulars* in respect of the various *degrees of freedom* of a determinable which both are prehended as having. The ostensible judgment which we make in such cases is a singular empirical judgment corresponding to a fact which is either non-modal or contingent. The ostensible judgments which McTaggart wants to account for are *a priori* judgments to the effect that *anything* characterised by *X* would *necessarily be* characterised by *Y*. No doubt you can express such

judgments by sentences of the form “*X* has the property of conveying *Y*.” But, in doing so, you tend to disguise the essential peculiarities which are made explicit in the less condensed mode of expression. These are the *generality* which is indicated by the word “anything”, and the *necessity* which is indicated by the phrase “would necessarily be”. Now these are the factors in the information supplied by ostensible *u*-judgments which it is hard to believe that any prehension could supply. And the examples on which McTaggart bases his theory are simply irrelevant to the question whether prehensions could supply information in which universality and necessity are essential factors.

(ii) We can now pass to the second case, viz., ostensible *u*-judgments about a characteristic which is not prehended as belonging to anything.

In the first place, we must notice that no special problem is raised merely by the fact that there are ostensible *u*-judgments about characteristics which *do not in fact* belong to anything. Provided that the person who makes the ostensible *u*-judgment misprehends some particular as having a certain characteristic, there is no difficulty in seeing that he can make an ostensible judgment about it even though in fact it does not characterise anything. This, however, does not completely solve the problem. It would be most unplausible to claim that everyone who has ever made an ostensible *u*-judgment about the property of being a phoenix or about that of being a non-Euclidean straight line must have misprehended some particular as a phoenix or as a non-Euclidean straight line.

Next, we must remark that McTaggart seems to think that, if the ostensible *u*-judgment is of the form “*X* conveys *Y*”, there is a difficulty *only* when the maker of this ostensible judgment does not prehend anything as having *X*. He finds no problem when the maker of the ostensible judgment does not prehend anything as having *Y*. He seems, therefore, to find no difficulty in holding that a person could prehend *X* as conveying *Y* even though he had never prehended anything as having *Y*. But surely there is a difficulty, except in two very special cases. It is intelligible if *X* be a conjunctive

characteristic, such as being red-and-hot, and  $Y$  is one of its conjuncts, such as being red. It is intelligible if  $X$  be a determinate, like being red, and  $Y$  be a determinable under which it falls, like being coloured. But surely in all other cases one would need to be supplied independently with an idea of  $Y$  before one could even *contemplate*, and *a fortiori* before one could *judge*, that  $X$  conveys  $Y$ . Is it credible, e.g., that a person who had never prehended anything as extended, but had prehended certain particulars as spiritual, could make the ostensible judgment that beings spiritual excludes being extended?

Having made these two preliminary comments, we can state McTaggart's explanation of how a person who has never prehended anything as having  $X$  can yet have a prehension which supplies all the information that is supplied by the ostensible judgment that  $X$  conveys  $Y$ . It is as follows.

Whenever a person makes an ostensible  $u$ -judgment about such a characteristic as being a phoenix or being a non-Euclidean straight line the ostensible judgment has been suggested to him, directly or remotely, by some ostensible prehension in which he did prehend particulars as having *certain* characteristics, though not that of phoenixhood or of non-Euclidean rectilinearity. Now, if ostensibly prehendingsome particular as having a certain characteristic  $C$  is necessary, and under certain circumstances sufficient, to make a person think of a certain other characteristic  $X$  which he has never prehended anything as having, this must be because there is some special link  $R$  between  $C$  and  $X$ . McTaggart's explanation, then, comes to this. Suppose I make the ostensible  $u$ -judgment that  $X$  conveys  $Y$ , though I have never prehended anything as having  $X$ . Then I am really prehendingsome particular as having  $C$ -related-by- $R$ -to- $X$ . Having got to this stage I may go on to prehend this particular as having  $C$ -related-by- $R$ -to- $X$ -which-conveys- $Y$ . This extremely complicated prehension is then misprehended as a judgment, and the usual loss of part of its prehensional content takes place. Everything else in the prehensional content which this prehension *really has* is dropped out of the propositional content which it is *prehended as having* except the information that  $X$  conveys  $Y$ .

In order to be fair to this theory we must bear in mind a fact which McTaggart points out in §659. We must not imagine that a prehension which is misprehended as a judgment must be a prehension whose object is, *sub specie temporis*, contemporary with itself. As we know, the object of a prehension need not occupy in its own *C*-series a position which corresponds to that occupied by the prehension in its *C*-series. It is only in the case of *ostensible* prehensions, i.e., those which appear as such when introspected, that the prehension and its object must occupy corresponding positions in their respective *C*-series. Therefore any prehension which is introspectively misprehended as a judgment made at a certain time may have for its object something which would appear, *sub specie temporis*, to be past or to be future. Thus the source from which ostensible judgments derive their content is much more copious than one might be inclined to think when one is told that all ostensible judgments are really prehensions.

I should think that this theory of McTaggart's is the best possible case that could be made for a hopelessly indefensible client. The only comment that I propose to offer is the following. The sole function which McTaggart gives to the introspective prehensions which present prehensions as judgments is that of distorting and impoverishing. They *distort* the psychological character of prehensions by misrepresenting them as judgments. They *reduce* the epistemological value of prehensions by presenting them as judgments with a propositional content which is only an extract from their actual prehensional content. Now I do not believe for a moment that the facts can be explained in these purely negative terms. It seems to me that positive intellectual processes of *reflecting* on the data supplied by prehension, of *abstracting* universals from instances, and of proceeding in thought from imperfect instances to ideal limits, must be postulated. I do not see that these functions could possibly be ascribed to the process of introspectively misprehending prehensions as judgments; and, if they were, that process would cease to be mere introspective prehension and would become genuine thinking.



#### 4. Ostensible Judgments and Endless Divisibility.

One more point remains to be considered. This is raised by McTaggart in § 661 of *The Nature of Existence*. It is as follows. Every prehension is endlessly divided in the Determining-Correspondence dimension into parts which are themselves prehensions. Now, McTaggart says, "A judgment is divided, but not into parts of parts to infinity. The judgment contains as its ultimate constituents simple characteristics which cannot be divided into parts." The question then arises "Can anything which is really divided in the first way appear as something which is divided in the second way?"

The first remark to be made is that the question rests on a gross confusion. Although McTaggart has rejected "propositions", he has here fallen a victim to the ambiguity of the word "judgment". This sometimes means an act or process of judging, and sometimes a proposition, i.e., a *judicatum* or a *judicabile*. It is obvious that he has been talking, up to the present, of judgments in the first sense. But, in that sense, it is certain that characteristics are *not* constituents of judgments. At most, acts or processes of cogitating characteristics are constituents of judgments in this sense. Characteristics themselves are constituents of judgments only in the sense of *propositions*. It is curious that, having asserted that prehensa are not parts of prehensions, he should accept without question that *judicata* are parts of judgments.

Once this point is grasped one sees that the whole problem with which McTaggart has been wrestling so ingeniously in Chap. LIV of *The Nature of Existence*, is, even on his own principles, a mare's nest. There is no reason why certain prehensions, or certain wholes composed of suitably inter-related prehensions, should not *actually be* judgments. If so, they will be divided endlessly into parts which are prehensions. But such parts will not have the property of being judgments. This may be compared to the fact that a complex substance which has the properties of water has, according to chemists, a set of parts no member of which has these properties.

## CHAPTER XLVII

### OSTENSIBLE INFERENCE

Some ostensible judgments are made ostensibly as a result of a process of inference, others are not. Some of the former are ostensibly reached by deduction, others by induction. Some of the latter are made because the connexion asserted to hold between the terms seems to be self-evidently necessary; others are mere reports of observed facts.

It may be that some ostensible judgments *could* be reached only by inference and not by direct inspection; and it may be that some of those which are reached by inference *could* be reached only by inductive inference. But, in a great many cases, ostensible judgments with precisely the same propositional content can be reached in several different ways. A person might ostensibly judge that the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are equal by following the process of deductive inference which is to be found in Euclid's *Elements*; he might see by direct inspection and reflexion on the nature of the terms that the proposition is necessary; or he might measure the basal angles of a large number of isosceles triangles of various shapes and sizes, find that they are equal in each case, and arrive by problematic induction at the conclusion that the basal angles of all isosceles triangles are equal. The question to be discussed in this chapter is the ostensibly different ways in which we come to make ostensible judgments, and not the peculiarities of those ostensible judgments, if such there be, which can be reached in only one of these ways. McTaggart deals with this question in Chap. LV of *The Nature of Existence*.

The question to be discussed divides into two, one of which is purely psychological and the other is logical or epistemological. (i) What is the right analysis of the statement "X

inferred the ostensible judgment *P* from the ostensible judgments *Q* and *R*''? (ii) What is meant by saying that *Q* and *R* together entail *P*?

McTaggart's answer to the first question may be put as follows. To say that *X* inferred *P* from *Q* and *R* means that (a) the occurrence of *P* in *X*'s mind was a consequence of a total cause which included the occurrence of *Q* and the occurrence of *R* as cause-factors; and (b) another cause-factor was *X*'s belief that *Q* and *R* together entail *P*.

Is there any difficulty in reconciling the ostensible occurrence of inference, thus defined, with McTaggart's general theory? We must remember that *P*, *Q*, and *R* will all be prehensions which *X* introspectively misprehends as judgments. Again, what is called "*X*'s belief that *Q* and *R* together entail *P*" must be a prehension which *X* misprehends introspectively as a judgment. Lastly, *P*, *Q*, *R*, and this other prehension occupy certain positions in *C*-series; and, when *X* misprehends them as judgments, he misprehends *them* as events, and *their C-positions* as the dates at which they happen. If all this is borne in mind, it is easy to translate the conditions (a) and (b) from the language of partly delusive appearance into that of reality.

Condition (a), when thus translated, will run as follows. The existence, at a certain position in a certain *C*-series, of that prehension which *X* introspectively misprehends as his judgment *P* is intrinsically determined by the existence, at nearly corresponding positions in certain other *C*-series, of a group of particulars which include among them those prehensions which *X* introspectively misprehends as his judgments *Q* and *R*.

Condition (b), when thus translated, will run as follows. An essential constituent of the group of particulars mentioned in Condition (a) is that prehension which *X* introspectively misprehends as his belief that *Q* and *R* together entail *P*.

Now there can be no objection to Condition (a), as restated, unless one denies that the character of the contents of one position in a *C*-series can intrinsically determine the character of the contents of a neighbouring position in the same or

another *C*-series. There is no reason to deny this; and, if one did so, one would have to give up all hope of reconciling the appearance of ordinary causal determination with McTaggart's theory of *C*-series.

In order to see whether there is any objection to Condition (b), as translated above, we shall have to begin by considering our second question, viz., What is meant by saying that *Q* and *R* together entail *P*? I propose to treat this in my own way.

*P*, *Q*, and *R* are ostensible judgments, i.e., they are mental particulars which are prehended as events of a certain kind. Now no one supposes that the relation of entailment relates judgments, in the sense of mental events. It is a logical, not a psychological, relation. When people talk of a judgment being entailed by a conjunction of two other judgments, they are using "judgment" to mean *judicatum* or *judicabile*, i.e., proposition. The question that we have now to answer is this. How are we to translate the phenomenal statement that *X* believes that *Q* and *R* together entail *P* from the language of partly delusive appearance into that of reality? I suggest that the answer would run as follows.

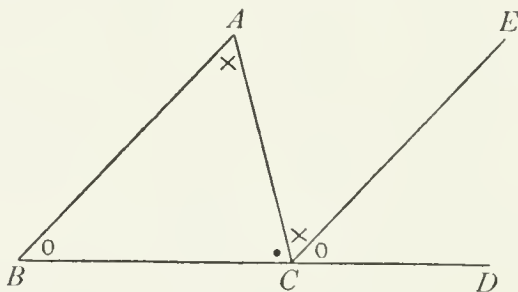
There is a certain relation *E* which *X* prehends (correctly or incorrectly) as holding between the *prehensional* contents of his prehensions *Q* and *R*, on the one hand, and the *prehensional* content of his prehension *P*, on the other. When *X* misprehends *P*, *Q*, and *R* as judgments he misprehends his prehension of this relation *E* as a judgment that the *propositional* contents which he now ascribes to *Q* and *R* together entail the *propositional* content which he now ascribes to *P*. His ostensible belief that the propositional contents of *Q* and *R* together entail the propositional content of *P* is *true* if and only if the relation *E* really does relate the prehensional contents of *Q* and *R*, on the one hand, to the prehensional content of *P*, on the other.

I think that this is how McTaggart ought to have stated his case. We have thus managed to translate, in terms of *C*-series and prehensions and relations between prehensional contents, all that is phenomenally true of inference when



stated in terms of time and judgment and relations between propositional contents. If this can be done, the ostensible occurrence of inference can be no objection to McTaggart's general theory.

The reader might fairly ask for an example in order to give him some idea of what I have in mind by the relation *E*. For this purpose we should have to take a case in which the prehensions are all ostensible and are not misprehended as judgments. Now I think that an example is provided by certain very simple geometrical demonstrations. Let us take Euclid's demonstration that the three angles of a triangle are together equal to two right angles. We take a triangle *ABC*. We produce any side, e.g., *BC*, to *D*. And we draw through *C* a line *CE* parallel to *AB*. See the figure below. Put a cross



in the angles *BAC* and *ACE*; put a nought in the angles *ECD* and *ABC*; and put a dot in the angle *ACB*. Then we ostensibly prehend the two angles with crosses in them as equal; we ostensibly prehend the two angles with noughts in them as equal; and we ostensibly prehend the nought-angle, the cross-angle, and the dot-angle at *C* as together making up two right angles. In consequence of this we prehend the three angles of the triangle as together making up two right angles. There is no need to make a single ostensible judgment or a single ostensible inference. Now the relation which subsists between the contents of the three ostensible prehensions first mentioned and the ostensible prehension of the three angles of the triangle as together making up two right angles would be an example of the relation *E*.

This is the most plausible case that I can make out for

McTaggart. In my own opinion something is involved even here which mere prehension cannot supply. This other factor is the generalisation from the particular figure prehended to *every* triangle of *any* shape or size, i.e., the separation in thought of certain features which are given together in prehension, and the recognition that certain of them are relevant and that others are irrelevant. This seems to me to be a typical and irreducible act of *thinking* as opposed to *prehending*.

## CHAPTER XLVIII

### OTHER OSTENSIBLE FORMS OF COGITATION

The forms of cogitation which remain to be considered are Supposing, Awareness of Characteristics, and Imaging. All the cogitations which we have so far considered were cognitions, but Supposing and Imaging are not cognitions in McTaggart's sense of the word. A person cannot have a misprehension or make a false ostensible judgment without being in error; but he can make a false ostensible supposition or an ostensible imaging which is not in accordance with fact and yet not be mistaken.

I have dealt fully with McTaggart's views on ostensible imaging in Sub-section 1.1 of Chap. xxv p. 21 of the present work, so there is not much more to be said about it here. There are, however, a few points still to be discussed about it which involve McTaggart's special theories about error and *C*-series. We will now take the three ostensible forms of cogitation in turn.

#### 1. Ostensible Supposing.

There are two questions to be considered here. (i) Is it possible that experiences which are really prehensions should be misprehended as states of supposing? (ii) Granted that this is possible, can we account in terms of prehension for the particular suppositions which are in fact made? We will now consider these two questions.

(i) Ostensible supposings agree with ostensible judgments in their general form and internal structure. When a prehension is introspectively misprehended as a judgment it is misprehended as having a certain propositional content; this is also the case when a prehension is misprehended as a supposing. On the other hand, ostensible judgments agree

with prehensions and differ from ostensible supposings in being *cognitions*. There is an element of "conviction", which is an essential factor in ostensible judgments and in prehensions, but is absent from ostensible supposings.

Granted that a prehension can be introspectively misprehended as a judgment, there is only one difficulty in holding that it can be introspectively misprehended as a supposition. Could a prehension, which is a cognition and involves the element of conviction, be misprehended as a supposition, which is a mere cogitation without the element of conviction? McTaggart answers that, on his general principle, *something* is always left out when a prehensive cognition is misprehended as discursive. We have only to suppose that, when a prehension is misprehended as a supposing, more is left out than when it is misprehended as a judgment. This further omission is the factor of conviction, which appears in the ostensible judgment as the element of assertion.

It seems desirable to point out that the two kinds of omission are quite different, because this tends to be obscured by the ambiguity of the word "judgment". When a prehension is introspectively misprehended as a judgment the omission takes the following form. The *propositional content* which the prehension is then prehended as having omits some of the *information* which is contained in the *prehensional content* which it really has. This may be described as an "epistemological", and not a "psychological", omission. When a prehension is introspectively misprehended as a supposing a similar epistemological omission takes place. But, in addition to this, a *psychological* omission takes place. The factor of conviction, which belongs to the prehension as an experience and not to its epistemological content, is omitted when the prehension is misprehended as a supposition. I think that it is important to emphasise this difference; for McTaggart talks as if we were concerned with a merely quantitative extension of a single admitted principle of impoverishment. It is quite plain that two different principles are involved.

(ii) The next question is whether we can account for the suppositions that are ostensibly made, in terms of prehensions



which we actually have. When we read a fantastic story, e.g., *Alice in Wonderland*, with understanding, we are ostensibly making many extremely wild suppositions. It is quite incredible that we actually misprehend particulars as having the characteristics which we ostensibly suppose certain particulars to have had when we read the story. What, then, are the prehensions which we misprehend as such suppositions?

McTaggart's solution had better be stated in his own words, because I believe that his language is ambiguous and needs criticism. He says in §671 "However wild an assumption may be, yet, if it actually does occur, we can always find a judgment which contains that assumption as an element." As an example he says that a person who makes the ostensible *supposition* that pigs have wings may very likely have made the ostensible *judgment* that there are many readers whose nature is such that they would be amused by contemplating the supposition that pigs have wings. Now if this ostensible judgment occurs, it must really be a prehension. When this prehension is misprehended to a certain extent it appears as this judgment which involves this supposition as an element. When it is still further misprehended it appears as the supposition that pigs have wings.

In order to understand this theory it is first necessary to point out that the word "assumption" or "supposition" has precisely the same kind of ambiguity as we have already found in the word "judgment". A "supposition" that pigs have wings may mean an *act of supposing* which has this propositional content, or it may mean the propositional content itself, i.e., the *suppositum* expressed by "Pigs have wings". In view of this, let us consider the statement that the *ostensible supposition* that pigs have wings is an element in the *ostensible judgment* that many people would be amused by contemplating the supposition that pigs have wings.

I think it is plain that there is one and only one way of translating this statement which makes it intelligible and not obviously false. It is as follows: "The *propositional content* of the ostensible supposition that pigs have wings is an element in the *propositional content* of the ostensible judgment that

many people would be amused by contemplating the proposition that pigs have wings." An equivalent translation would run as follows: "The ostensible *suppositum* that pigs have wings is an element in the ostensible *judicatum* that many people would be amused by contemplating the *suppositum* that pigs have wings." This is intelligible; and I suppose that, in one of the many senses of "element in", it is true.

Let us now try to restate the general theory. It would run as follows. In any mind in which an ostensible supposition has occurred there has occurred an ostensible judgment whose *judicatum* contains as an element the *suppositum* of this ostensible supposition. Now the ostensible judgment is really a prehension, and its ostensible *judicatum* is an extract from its real prehensional content. So we may assume that the ostensible supposition is this same prehension still further misprehended, and that its ostensible *suppositum* has lost certain elements of the prehensional content which were retained in the ostensible *judicatum*.

## 2. Ostensible Awareness of Characteristics.

In §672 McTaggart tries to account for ostensible awareness of characteristics by postulating a further extension of the same process. His language is again very careless, so I will again quote his own statements and then try to make sense of them. "Judgments and assumptions contain characteristics as constituents. And the prehension may be so misprehended as to be prehended with still less of the information which it gives than would be the case if it appeared as a judgment or as an assumption. In that case the only information which appears may be the meaning of one of the characteristics; and thus we shall get an apparent awareness of the characteristic, as distinct from any proposition into which the characteristic enters." (I have made the usual substitution of "prehension" for "perception".)

Now, in the first place, it is only *judicata* and *supposita* that can be said to "contain characteristics as constituents". Secondly, the phrase "the meaning of one of the characteristics" is nonsensical. Only *words* and other kinds of

symbols can *have* meaning; though, of course, a characteristic, such as redness, can *be* the meaning of an adjectival word, such as "red". I think that a correct statement of McTaggart's doctrine would run as follows.

The prehensional content of a prehension contains characteristics as constituents. If, e.g., Iprehend something as red, then redness is a constituent of the content of this prehension. When a prehension is misprehended as a judgment or a supposition it is misprehended as having propositional content, and some of the characteristics which are constituents of its prehensional content are prehended as constituents of its propositional content. Finally a stage may be reached at which introspective misprehension goes so far that the prehension is no longer prehended as having even propositional content. It is then prehended merely as a *thought of* one or other of the *characteristics* which are constituents of its prehensional content, e.g., as a thought of redness.

### 3. Ostensible Imaging.

Ostensible imaging resembles prehension in not being a discursive kind of cogitation; it resembles ostensible supposing, and differs from ostensible judging and prehension, in lacking the factor of conviction and therefore not being a form of cognition. I have explained in Sub-section 1.11 of Chap. xxv p. 26 of the present work why I think McTaggart's notion of imaging thoroughly confused and unsatisfactory, and I have stated what seems to me to be the right analysis of it. My analysis is roughly as follows. Suppose that I have an experience which McTaggart would describe as "imaging the destruction of Westminster Abbey by hostile aircraft". Then (i) I am ostensibly *supposing* the proposition that the Abbey is being or has been or will be so destroyed. (ii) In close causal connexion with this experience I am ostensibly *prehending* certain particulars as images which have certain qualities and form a certain pattern. And (iii) I am ostensibly *judging* that these images resemble the *sensa* that a man would sense if he were to witness the destruction of the Abbey by hostile aircraft.

If McTaggart is right in his general principles, the ostensible supposing and the ostensible judging which, on my view, are involved in this process of imaging must really be prehensions. Granted this, there is not the least reason to believe that *one and the same* prehension is (a) correctly prehended as a prehension of certain ostensible images, (b) misprehended as a supposition that the Abbey is being or has been or will be destroyed by hostile aircraft, and (c) misprehended as a judgment that the prehended images resemble the *sensa* which a man would sense if he were a witness of the supposed event. It seems almost certain that three quite different prehensions would be involved. But McTaggart, failing to make a proper analysis of the process of imaging, looks about for a *single* prehension which can plausibly be taken as *the* prehension which is introspectively misprehended as a certain experience of imaging. It is needless to follow McTaggart into the rookery of mare's nests which occupy the later sections of Chap. LVI.

McTaggart brings ostensible memory under the head of ostensible imaging. Let us suppose that a person ostensibly remembers having witnessed the destruction of Westminster Abbey by hostile aircraft. The analysis which I would suggest is as follows: (i) He is prehending certain particulars as images which have certain qualities and form a certain pattern. (ii) This experience is a cause-factor in causing him to have a non-inferential belief that he formerly had certain sensations whose objects resembled the images which he is now prehending. (iii) He believes that these sensations were constituents in a perception by him of Westminster Abbey being destroyed by hostile aircraft. In this particular case the second belief is certainly false, and the first belief may be so or not.

If McTaggart's general principles are correct, both these ostensible beliefs must in fact be prehensions. Now he asserts in §674 that it is "possible for a single prehension to appear both as the apparent imaging and the apparent judgment which are involved in memory". What are we to say about this?



On our analysis *two* ostensible judgments and *one* ostensible prehension are involved in ostensible memory. So the question for us is this. Is it possible that *one and the same* prehension should be (a) correctly prehended as a prehension of certain ostensible images, (b) misprehended as a judgment that the experient formerly had certain sensations whose objects resembled the images which he is now prehending, and (c) misprehended as a judgment that these sensations were constituents in a perception by him of the Abbey being destroyed by hostile aircraft? It seems to me very difficult to believe that this could be so. But, so far as I can see, it is not essential for McTaggart's general theory that it should be so. Provided that each of the ostensible judgments is really a prehension, it would be no objection to his general theory that each ostensible judgment should be a *different* prehension and that both these prehensions should be different from the prehension of the images.

## CHAPTER XLIX

### MAXIMAL AND PRE-MAXIMAL EMOTION AND VOLITION

In Chaps. xxviii and xxix, respectively, of the present work we explained and criticised McTaggart's analysis of volition and emotion. It will be remembered that a volition proved to be a cogitation qualified by the characteristic of acquiescence, and an emotion proved to be a cogitation qualified by one or other of several different emotional qualities. Since then we have been taught that all cogitation is really prehension, though many prehensions are introspectively misprehended as other kinds of cogitation. We have also been told that prehensions are of two fundamentally different kinds, viz.,  $\omega$ -prehensions, which are the maximal end-terms of secondary  $C$ -series, and  $r$ -prehensions, which are pre-maximal terms of  $C$ -series. And we have received much detailed information about the nature and relations of  $r$ -prehensions and  $\omega$ -prehensions. We must now bring together these two parts of McTaggart's system. The relevant information will be found in certain sections of Chaps. xl and xli of *The Nature of Existence*, which I have so far left out of account, and in Chap. lvii.

Since all volitions and all emotions are prehensions, and since all prehensions are either of the  $r$ -kind or the  $\omega$ -kind, it is evident that volitions and emotions can be divided into  $r$ -volitions and  $r$ -emotions, on the one hand, and  $\omega$ -volitions and  $\omega$ -emotions, on the other. The first question to be considered is whether there is any reason to hold that  $\omega$ -prehensions have the quality of acquiescence or any of the emotional qualities. Unless they do the class of  $\omega$ -volitions and the class of  $\omega$ -emotions are mere blank windows. Again, supposing that there are  $\omega$ -volitions, do they differ in any important respects from  $r$ -volitions? And, supposing that there are

$\omega$ -emotions, is every kind of emotional quality which can qualify an  $r$ -prehension capable also of qualifying an  $\omega$ -prehension and *vice versa*? Lastly, when we misprehend a prehension, whether of the  $r$ -kind or the  $\omega$ -kind, as temporal and as a non-prehensive cogitation, do we also misprehend its volitional and emotional qualities? These are the questions to be discussed in the present chapter. They are interesting and important in themselves, and also highly relevant to McTaggart's later attempts to estimate the amount of value in the universe.

### 1. $\omega$ -Volitions and $\omega$ -Emotions.

The first question to be considered is whether we have any reason to believe that there are  $\omega$ -emotions or  $\omega$ -volitions. Can we be sure that any  $\omega$ -prehension is toned with any emotional quality or with the volitional quality of acquiescence? McTaggart's argument takes the following course. He first tries to show that every  $\omega$ -prehension in any self of any other self is *ipso facto* an emotion of love in the former towards the latter. From this he argues to the existence of certain other  $\omega$ -emotions, dependent on this  $\omega$ -love. And from this he argues that all  $\omega$ -prehensions are *ipso facto* satisfied volitions. We will now consider this argument step by step.

(i) McTaggart claims to have shown in his general account of love that a self  $A$  will love another self  $B$  if and only if  $A$  is, and knows himself to be, united in a specially close and intimate way with  $B$ . Now suppose that the self  $P_2$  is a member of the differentiating group of the self  $P_1$ . Then  $P_1$  will contain an  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{12}$  of  $P_2$  as a self. He will also, if he is self-conscious, contain an  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{112}$  of his prehension  $P_{12}$  as a prehension in himself of  $P_2$ . Thus the question for McTaggart comes to this. Does the existence of the  $\omega$ -prehensions  $P_{12}$  and  $P_{112}$  in  $P_1$  constitute an intimate enough degree of unity and a strong enough consciousness of unity between himself and  $P_2$  to ensure that  $P_{12}$  shall be toned with the erotic emotional quality? This question is discussed in §470.

(ii) The argument is as follows, subject to some necessary corrections. If one self cogitates another in any way, this fact constitutes some degree of unity between the former and the latter. And, if the former is aware in any way of cogitating the second, he is to some extent conscious of this *de facto* unity between himself and the latter. Now, speaking in temporal terms, it is true to say that no self in the course of history has *ostensibly* prehended any other self. *A*'s cogitation of *B* has always appeared to himself to be very indirect. It is plain that, if a self *ostensibly* prehended another self, he would have a much more intense awareness of *cognitive* unity with the latter than he could have when he appeared to himself to be aware of it only indirectly through perceiving its body. Now we know that our present cognitions of other selves, though they are all apparently indirect, are often toned with the erotic emotional quality. Therefore if the presence of erotic emotional tone depended only on the existence and awareness of a high enough degree of *cognitive* unity, we could be certain that all the  $\omega$ -prehensions in self-conscious selves of other selves would be emotions of love towards the latter.

But, McTaggart says, this condition is not fulfilled. In our everyday experience we are conscious of quite as much *cognitive* unity with selves to whom we are indifferent or whom we hate as with selves whom we love. Therefore, the additional intensity of our consciousness of unity with those whom we do love must depend on some condition beside *de facto* cognitive unity and awareness of it. "Might it not be possible", he says, "that no consciousness of unity would be intense enough to produce love unless it derived some of its strength from characteristics other than cognitional?"

Now this extremely honest question really knocks the bottom out of the argument. McTaggart falls back on the following assertion. Granted that none of us in his everyday experience has ostensibly prehended another self, each of us has ostensibly prehended himself, many of his own experiences, and many sensibilia. Again, each of us has cognised other selves by means of ostensible judgments, suppositions, imagings, etc. He alleges that, with these materials, we can



image fairly adequately what it would be like to have an ostensible prehension of another self. And he asserts that, when we do this, we can see that ostensibly prehending another self would unite one more closely to it than *any* bond would unite one to a self which one does not ostensiblyprehend.

To this I can only answer (a) that I very much doubt whether I do *prehend* my self, though I do not wish to deny that I may *perceive* my self. Therefore (b) I lack an essential condition for imaging what it would be like to *prehend* another self. And (c) in point of fact I have no idea what it would be like toprehend another self, and I very much doubt whether anyone else is in a more fortunate position. Therefore (d) I am in no position to see by inspection that ostensiblyprehending a self would unite me more closely to it than any bond which unites me to selves which I do not ostensiblyprehend. (e) I know that in everyday life a *necessary* condition of my loving another person is that I should ostensiblyperceive his ostensible body, that I should ostensibly talk with him, and so on. Now this condition can be fulfilled only by  $r$ -prehensions and not by  $\omega$ -prehensions. I do not know what, if anything, would correspond to these experiences at the  $\omega$ -stage. If anything does correspond, it must be so different from the experience of ostensiblyperceiving a person's ostensible body that it is quite impossible to guess whether it would have any kind of emotional tone. The plain fact is that all experience of love has been love of *persons*, i.e., of wholes composed of a self and an organism which appears as a body, inter-related in a perfectly unique and extremely intimate way. McTaggart talks of loving *selves*. No one in real life ever talks in this way. We no more love *selves* than we love *corpses*. The fascinating pages of Havelock Ellis do, indeed, contain a few accounts of necrophilia; but even they record no case of anything so exotic as psychophilia, which would be its contrary opposite.

It seems to me, then, that McTaggart has not produced the faintest reason for his doctrine that every  $\omega$ -prehension in one self of another self is an emotion of love in the former for the latter.

(iii) As we have seen in Sub-section 2.2 of Chap. XXIX of the present work, McTaggart holds that there are certain other emotions which are dependent on love. If love exists in the  $\omega$ -stage, these dependent emotions must also exist at that stage. Let us consider three selves  $P_1$ ,  $P_2$ , and  $P_3$ . We will suppose that both  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  are members of  $P_1$ 's differentiating group, and we will suppose that  $P_3$  is a member of  $P_2$ 's differentiating group, but not of  $P_1$ 's. Then there will certainly be the  $\omega$ -prehensions  $P_{11}$  and  $P_{12}$  and  $P_{23}$ , but there will be no  $\omega$ -prehesion  $P_{13}$ . There will, however, be the  $\omega$ -prehesion  $P_{123}$ . And, of course, there will be  $P_{111}$  and  $P_{112}$ . Now we have been told that  $P_{12}$  will necessarily be an emotion of love in  $P_1$  for  $P_2$ . What will be the emotional qualities of  $P_{11}$ , of  $P_{111}$  and  $P_{112}$ , and of  $P_{123}$ , respectively?

(a) According to McTaggart, if one loves another and is aware of doing so, this involves that one's prehension of one's self will be toned with self-reverence. So  $P_{11}$  must be an emotion of  $\omega$ -self-reverence.

(b) According to him, if one loves another and is aware of doing so, this involves that one's prehension of one's own experiences will be toned with complacency. So  $P_{111}$ ,  $P_{112}$ , and all  $P_1$ 's reflexive prehensions below the grade of  $P_{11}$  must be emotions of  $\omega$ -complacency.

(c) It remains to consider such non-reflexive secondary parts, of the second and lower grades, as  $P_{123}$ . According to McTaggart,  $P_{123}$  will combine two different, but connected, kinds of emotional tone. In the first place, since it is a prehension in  $P_1$  of an experience  $P_{23}$  which belongs to a self  $P_2$  whom he loves, it will be toned with complacency. Thus  $P_{123}$  is an emotion of  $\omega$ -complacency in  $P_1$  towards  $P_{23}$ . But, since  $P_{23}$  is a prehension in  $P_2$  of  $P_3$ ,  $P_{123}$  is also an *indirect perception* in  $P_1$  of  $P_3$ . Now, in respect of being an indirect perception in  $P_1$  of a self who is loved by his beloved  $P_2$ , though not by  $P_1$  himself, it is toned with affection. Thus  $P_{123}$  is an emotion of  $\omega$ -affection in  $P_1$  for  $P_3$ .

So, if we accept McTaggart's contention that all non-reflexive first-grade  $\omega$ -prehensions are emotions of love, and accept his psychological doctrine of the emotions which

depend on love, we reach the following conclusion: (a) All non-reflexive first-grade  $\omega$ -prehensions are emotions of love. (b) All reflexive first-grade  $\omega$ -prehensions are emotions of self-reverence. (c) All  $\omega$ -prehensions of lower grade than the first are emotions of complacency towards experiences. (d) Non-reflexive  $\omega$ -prehensions of lower grade than the first are also emotions of affection towards selves.

I have criticised the psychological doctrine in Sub-section 2.2 of Chap. XXIX of the present work, and I need only refer the reader to that sub-section.

(iv) In §453 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart argues that a person whose cogitations were all *veridical cognitions* could have no frustrated desires. If a veridical cognition be a desire at all, it must be a fulfilled desire. I have discussed this doctrine in Section 3 of Chap. XXVIII of the present work. Now all  $\omega$ -prehensions are perfectly correct cognitions. So, he concludes, *if*  $\omega$ -prehensions are desires at all, they must be fulfilled desires.

If the reader will refer to Section 3 of Chap. XXVIII, he will see that this doctrine of McTaggart's depends on his assumption that there is no quality of "disquiescence" which stands in polar opposition to the quality of "acquiescence", and that therefore to cogitate  $X$  with aversion is simply to cogitate non- $X$  with acquiescence. I remarked that McTaggart has not produced the faintest reason for this doctrine, and I brought forward examples to show that it is most unpalatable.

Now, as I pointed out, if this premise of McTaggart's be rejected, it is perfectly possible that a person should have *fulfilled aversions*, even if all his cogitation consisted of veridical cognition. This would consist simply in cognising certain objects correctly and cognising them with aversion. It is true, however, that such a person could not have *frustrated wishes* corresponding to his fulfilled aversions. For, in order to do this he would need to *suppose* with acquiescence an alternative state of affairs to that which he cognises with disquiescence. And, since all his cogitations are assumed to be cognitions, he cannot make any suppositions at all.

I think, therefore, that it is correct to say that, at the

$\omega$ -stage, there could be no *unfulfilled* wishes; because there could be no *wishes* at all, since wishing on its cogitative side is supposing. But there could be *fulfilled aversions*. I do not think that we have any means of imaging what this state of affairs would be like, viz., cognising certain facts with aversion and yet being incapable of supposing (and therefore of wishing) any alternative to them. For, in some sense, we certainly can in ordinary life conceive alternatives even to facts which we know to be necessary. Thus, e.g., a person who knows that the square-root of two is necessarily irrational can, in some sense, suppose that it had been rational and can wish that this had been the case.

If no  $\omega$ -prehension can be an unfulfilled desire, it follows at once, that no such prehension can be the *object* of an unfulfilled desire at the  $\omega$ -stage. For at the  $\omega$ -stage any desire about an  $\omega$ -prehension would itself be an  $\omega$ -prehension. And it is impossible that this should be a wish that the  $\omega$ -prehension which is its object should be other than it is prehended as being. We must add, however, in my opinion, that it is quite possible that an  $\omega$ -prehension should be the object of a *fulfilled aversion* at the  $\omega$ -stage. E.g., I can see no reason why  $P_{112}$  should not be an  $\omega$ -prehension in  $P_1$  of his  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{12}$  which is toned with aversion. All that we can say is that, if  $P_1$  at the  $\omega$ -stage prehends any of his own experiences with aversion, he cannot have a *frustrated wish* that they should have been otherwise than they are; because he cannot form the supposition that anything should have been other than it is.

(v) In §478 McTaggart completes his discussion of this topic by trying to show that all  $\omega$ -prehensions are in fact volitions, and therefore are satisfied volitions. This conclusion rests on the premise that a self will necessarily cognise with acquiescence the existence of any self whom he cognises with love. "I may not get happiness from my beloved or from my love of him....But there is one thing I must desire if I love him. I desire his existence. I want him to be there."

At the  $r$ -stage a self can, on balance, desire the non-existence of another self whom he loves. For he can ostensibly



suppose the non-existence of the beloved self, although he knows that it exists. Now he may cognise his beloved as extremely vicious and extremely unhappy, beside cognising him as existing. This will cause his ostensible  $r$ -supposition of his beloved's non-existence to be toned with acquiescence. And this may altogether outweigh the acquiescence with which he cognises his beloved as existing. But there can be no ostensible suppositions at the  $\omega$ -stage. So at that stage there can be no wish for the non-existence of the beloved self, as vicious and unhappy, to outweigh the desire for his existence as beloved.

This is, I think, a legitimate conclusion from McTaggart's premises. But we must add the usual qualification. There is nothing to prevent  $P_1$  from prehending  $P_2$ 's existence with disquiescence in respect of certain qualities which he is prehended as having. And this disquiescence might outweigh the acquiescence with which  $P_2$ 's existence is prehended as a beloved self. All that we can say is that, even if this should be the case,  $P_1$  will not have a frustrated wish for  $P_2$ 's non-existence; for he will not be able to form any ostensible supposition whatever, and therefore will not be able to form the acquiescent supposition that  $P_2$  should not have existed or should have had different qualities. As I have said, I do not think that we have the experiential materials for imaging what this would be like. But there is no logical or psychological impossibility in such a state of affairs.

We may sum up our criticisms on this part of McTaggart's doctrine as follows. Everything of importance in it turns on the following assumption. To cognise  $X$  with aversion simply *means* to cognise  $X$  as having certain characteristics and to suppose with acquiescence either the non-existence of  $X$  or the existence of  $X$  with different characteristics from those which it is cognised as having. If this be granted, it follows that nothing can be cognised with aversion unless ostensible suppositions can be made about it. Now at the  $\omega$ -stage there is no form of cogitation except ostensible prehension, and therefore no ostensible suppositions can exist about anything. Hence it follows that nothing can be cognised with aversion

at the  $\omega$ -stage. Therefore at that stage there can be neither frustrated desires nor fulfilled aversions. Now I reject the fundamental premise of this argument as unproven and highly improbable. So, whilst I agree that there could be no *frustrated* wishes, because there could be no *wishes* at all, at the  $\omega$ -stage, I hold that there is no reason why there should not be *fulfilled aversions*. And I see no reason why the disquiescence of the fulfilled aversions should not outweigh the acquiescence of the fulfilled desires.

## 2. Peculiarities of $\omega$ -Emotions.

In §§473 and 474 McTaggart argues that the intensity of  $\omega$ -emotions must be greater than that of the corresponding  $r$ -emotions. He gives five reasons why the intensity of  $\omega$ -love should be greater than that of  $r$ -love.

(i) When one self *ostensibly* prehends another there must be a much more intense consciousness of unity than when it knows the other ostensibly only in a very roundabout way by discursive cognition. At the  $r$ -stages love is often greatly hampered by the inadequacy, inaccuracy, and apparent indirectness of the lover's knowledge of his beloved. These obstacles must be absent at the  $\omega$ -stage.

(ii) At the  $r$ -stages love is often checked by the fact that the lover cognises his beloved as having certain qualities which he finds repulsive. But many of these ostensibly exemplified characteristics are delusive, and therefore at the  $\omega$ -stage they cannot be prehended as qualifying the beloved. Others of them, though not delusive, are of trivial importance at the  $\omega$ -stage, though they are of considerable relative importance at the  $r$ -stages. So, at the  $\omega$ -stage, love will be much less checked in this way.

(iii) At the  $r$ -stages, when a lover cognises his beloved as having some quality which repels him, he generally has a frustrated wish that this quality were absent. This often checks his love still further. But at the  $\omega$ -stage this source of hindrance must be absent, since there can be no desire for anything to be other than it is prehended as being.

(iv) All the non-reflexive first-grade secondary parts of a

self are emotions of love, since they are  $\omega$ -prehensions in him of the other selves in his differentiating group. Thus a self has a set of parts, of which every member but one is an emotion of love. At the  $\omega$ -stage he is directly aware of himself as so constituted. At the  $r$ -stages he is ignorant of this fact, or, if he knows it, he does so only by ostensibly discursive cognition as a theorem in philosophy. It is only at the  $\omega$ -stage that we can verify by experience the assertion of the Fairy Queen in *Iolanthe*:

And in fact you will discover  
That we almost live on lover!

and find that it is an understatement of the facts. This realisation of the fact that love is so fundamental and pervasive an element in our selves must, McTaggart thinks, tend to increase its intensity at the  $\omega$ -stage.

(v) At the  $r$ -stages actual experiences of love for a person appear as events or processes in the lover's mental history. Each appears to last for a certain time, and to wax and wane in intensity while it lasts or to maintain a fixed intensity for a while. Between these actual experiences of loving this person there appear to be intervals during which there is no actual experience, and one's love for him exists only in a dispositional form. Often, *sub specie temporis*, a lover is separated in space from his beloved, and often we seem to be occupied in activities which are not processes of loving. Now at the  $\omega$ -stage there cannot be this delusive appearance of one's love for a person alternating between actual emotion and unactualised emotional disposition. Again, there cannot be the delusive appearance either of the emotional experience enduring without change of intensity or of it waxing and waning in intensity. These temporal appearances in the  $r$ -stages are associated with feelings of strain and anxiety; and such hindrances to love must be absent at the  $\omega$ -stage.

I will now make some comments on these five propositions. (a) We may grant that some repellent qualities, which a lover may cognise at the  $r$ -stages as characterising his beloved, are delusive, and therefore would not be prehended at the  $\omega$ -stage as characterising him. But it is surely rather important to

notice that almost all the attractive qualities which a lover cognises at the  $r$ -stages as belonging to his beloved are also delusive, if McTaggart is right, and therefore cannot be prehended at the  $\omega$ -stage as belonging to him. For almost all these attractive qualities either are, or are inseparably bound up with, qualities of the ostensible body of the beloved. If a self were prehended as such, and its organism were correctly prehended as a group composed wholly of selves or experiences or both, there might be nothing in this highly sanitary and aseptic experience to *repel* the lover. The difficulty lies in seeing what there would be to *attract* him. Now, if love can be checked by the apparent presence of repulsive qualities in the beloved, it can presumably be heightened by the apparent presence of attractive qualities and checked by their absence. Nothing that McTaggart has said about repellent qualities being delusive proves that  $\omega$ -love gains more on the swings than it loses on the roundabouts, as compared with  $r$ -love, through lacking the delusions which characterise  $r$ -love.

(b) Even if we waive this objection, McTaggart's argument seems to involve the naive, but extremely common, fallacy which I am wont to think of as "the kite-string fallacy". The thinner and lighter the string of a kite is made, the higher it will fly; and the tension in the string tends to pull it down. So one might argue that, if only it had no string and no downward pull, the kite would fly infinitely higher. Actually, as we all know, it would at once fall to the ground. The application of the kite-string fallacy to McTaggart's argument is obvious. He assumes that, because certain factors are obstacles to love, and because love tends to diminish in intensity as they increase, therefore, if they were wholly removed, love would reach an intensity which it never reaches when they are present. He may be right. But it is a most dangerous argument to use in any matter of the feelings and emotions, especially where we have never experienced and cannot image the complete absence of the factor in question.

(c) I am altogether distrustful of arguments from the inconveniences of the ostensibly temporal to the superior advantages of the eternal. Certainly, in a timeless state which



is prehended as such, there could be neither the defect of *transience* (since nothing can appear to change or to come into being or to pass away), nor the defect of *monotony* (since nothing can appear to endure unchanged). On the other hand, there cannot be the occurrence of novelty, the process of growth and development, or the experience of constructing things, of carrying out plans, of overcoming obstacles, and so on. These are very serious losses. It is all very well to allege that they are more than balanced by the special joys peculiar to an experience which not only is eternal but is recognised as such. Perhaps they are. But, as none of us has the materials for forming any positive idea of what such an experience would be like, we have to take all this on trust from people who are, from the nature of the case, no better qualified than ourselves to express an opinion. The best comment that I can make is to quote Mr Belloc's verse about the microbe:

Its eyebrows (of a vivid green)  
Have never never yet been seen;  
But Scientists, who ought to know,  
Assure us that it *must* be so.  
O, let us never never doubt  
What no one can be sure about!

### 3. Peculiarities of *r*-Emotions.

In §§479 and 480 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart tries to show that certain emotional qualities which do characterise some *r*-prehensions cannot characterise any  $\omega$ -prehensions.

In the first place, there cannot be  $\omega$ -*hatred*, though there is *r*-hatred. For every  $\omega$ -prehension in a self of another self is an emotion of love in the former for the latter. And the hate-quality is incompatible with the love-quality.

Secondly, he alleges, there can be no  $\omega$ -*repugnance*. His ground for this is that repugnance, in his sense of the word, is incompatible with self-reverence, with love, and with complacency, in his senses of those words. We must take it that "repugnance" means a direct dislike felt, not in respect of any quality which the cognised object is cognised as having, but directly. Repugnance, in this sense, would, I think, be

incompatible with self-reverence and with love. It is not so clear that it would be incompatible with complacency in McTaggart's sense of the word. Surely it is conceivable that a lover might prehend a certain state of his beloved with complacency in respect of its characteristic of belonging to a self whom he loves, and yet also prehend it with direct repugnance.

*Malignancy* is a volitional state, viz., desiring the ill-being of another self. McTaggart holds that this is not incompatible with loving that self. But he says, rightly I think, that, when it is found co-existing with love, it seems always to be dependent on some ungratified desire. This desire is often, though not always, sexual. Since there are no unsatisfied  $\omega$ -desires, it seems very unlikely that there can be  $\omega$ -malignancy.

We have seen, however, that there might be  $\omega$ -prehensions qualified by disquiescence. It seems to me not impossible that these, if they existed, might determine  $\omega$ -malignancy.

It is plain that any emotional quality which can qualify only those cogitations which are or contain ostensible suppositions must be confined to the  $r$ -stages. This includes all emotions which depend on the unfulfilled wish that something should have been different from what it in fact is. Again, any emotional quality which can qualify only those cogitations which present their objects as temporal must be confined to the  $r$ -stages. These conditions rule out from the  $\omega$ -stage *anger*, *jealousy*, *envy*, *regret*, *remorse*, *curiosity*, and *hope* or *fear* directed to the future.

*Sub specie temporis* each of us has from time to time painful experiences. When prehended from the  $\omega$ -stage, these are prehended as painful, for they really have this quality, though they are not prehended as events in our history. Now this correct prehension of them as timeless and painful parts of one's self might be emotionally toned with a kind of shrinking horror. So *fear*, in this sense, could exist in the  $\omega$ -stage. But it seems evident that it would be very unimportant as compared with fear of the future, which can exist only in the  $r$ -stages.

At the  $r$ -stages love and affection are commonly accompanied by *sympathy* with their objects. There is no reason to

doubt that there is  $\omega$ -sympathy accompanying  $\omega$ -love and  $\omega$ -affection. Again, at the  $r$ -stages we feel *approval* of another person in respect of his property of loving others. There is no reason to doubt that there is approval on this score at the  $\omega$ -stage. Lastly, self-reverence, which we know to exist at the  $\omega$ -stage, is a form of *pride*.

The existence of  $\omega$ -approval and  $\omega$ -pride is not inconsistent with the possibility of  $\omega$ -disapproval and  $\omega$ -humility. I suppose that it is possible that a self's  $\omega$ -prehension of those  $r$ -terms which would appear *sub specie temporis* as discreditable actions in the course of his history might be toned with *humility* and *disapproval*. But a self's  $\omega$ -prehension of his own  $\omega$ -stage could hardly be toned with humility. According to McTaggart, as we shall see later, the  $\omega$ -stage does contain some pain, but does not contain any other form of evil. In respect of this pain there could be  *$\omega$ -disapproval* for the  $\omega$ -stages of oneself and others.

Lastly, McTaggart thinks that it is doubtful whether there can be any  $\omega$ -emotion corresponding to the  $r$ -emotion of loyalty to a group. He thinks that there is no means of showing that there are any emotions towards groups of persons at the  $\omega$ -stage. It is interesting to note this conclusion as a sign of McTaggart's extreme honesty and objectivity in philosophising. Very few people can have had stronger emotions of loyalty and devotion than McTaggart to certain groups of persons, such as his school, his college, and his country. He would certainly have wished to be able to show that such emotions exist at the  $\omega$ -stage. But he had a still stronger loyalty to philosophical truth, as he conceived it, and he honestly followed the argument whithersoever it led him.

#### 4. The Theory of $C$ -Series and the Facts about Volition and Emotion.

One other question remains, which McTaggart discusses in Chap. LVII of *The Nature of Existence*. Can we reconcile what we have learned about the emotional and volitional character of the maximal end-terms of  $C$ -series with the emotional and

volitional appearances of everyday life if we accept McTaggart's general theory of Time and Error?

(i) If the general theory is true, all  $r$ -cogitations, of whatever kind they may seem on introspection to be, are in fact  $r$ -prehensions. They are parts, in the  $C$ -dimension, of  $\omega$ -prehensions in the same self of the same object. Now many  $r$ -states of prehension seem to have certain emotional qualities which no  $\omega$ -state of prehension can have. Again, some  $r$ -states of prehension seem to have emotional qualities which are inconsistent with those which  $\omega$ -prehensions have. Suppose, e.g., that *sub specie temporis*  $P_1$  appears to hate  $P_2$ . Since  $P_1$  cogitates  $P_2$ , either  $P_2$  is in  $P_1$ 's differentiating group, or  $P_2$  is in the differentiating group of another self  $P_3$  who is in  $P_1$ 's differentiating group. In the first case there is in  $P_1$  the  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{12}$ , and this must be an emotion of love in  $P_1$  towards  $P_2$ . In the second case there is in  $P_1$  the  $\omega$ -prehension  $P_{132}$ , and this must be a state of affection in  $P_1$  towards  $P_2$ . Now, in the first case,  $P_1$ 's ostensible emotion of hatred for  $P_2$  must be an  $r$ -prehension  $P_{12}^r$ ; and, in the second case, it must be an  $r$ -prehension  $P_{132}^r$ . If the general theory is correct,  $P_{12}^r$  is a part of  $P_{12}$ , and  $P_{132}^r$  is a part of  $P_{132}$ . So the question arises whether an emotion of hatred in a certain self for a certain other self could be part of an emotion of love or of affection in the same self for that other self.

McTaggart says that there is no difficulty in this. In the first place, the  $r$ -prehension is partly incorrect and presents its object in a distorted form, whilst the  $\omega$ -prehension is perfectly correct and presents the same object as it really is. There is nothing surprising in the fact that the emotional qualities of two prehensions which differ in this way should be different and even opposed. Secondly, we are all familiar with the fact that a whole may have a different quality from that which is possessed by one of its parts. The properties of water, e.g., are extremely unlike those of its constituents, oxygen and hydrogen. Lastly, we are not asked to believe that an emotion of love or affection has a *set* of parts *every* member of which is an emotion of hatred. The residue of an  $\omega$ -prehension without a certain  $r$ -prehension is not a state of prehension at all. It is



therefore not an emotion at all. This answer seems to me to be satisfactory.

A similar problem arises over volitions. All the volitions of daily life, however they may appear on introspection, are in fact  $r$ -states of prehension. Some of them are unsatisfied, and some of them are known at the time of their occurrence to be unsatisfied. Yet, as  $r$ -states of prehension, every one of them is a part of an  $\omega$ -prehension in the same self of the same object. And every  $\omega$ -prehension is a fulfilled volition.

The solution is the same in principle as before. Any  $r$ -prehension is partly correct and partly incorrect, whilst the corresponding  $\omega$ -prehension is perfectly correct. The  $\omega$ -prehension is toned with acquiescence because of certain qualities which it correctly presents its object as having. The  $r$ -prehension may present its object correctly as having these qualities, and may therefore be toned with acquiescence too. It will then be a fulfilled desire also. It may present its object incorrectly as having certain qualities which it does not in fact have. If it is toned with disquiescence in respect of presenting the object as having these qualities, it will be an unfulfilled desire. Lastly, the qualities which it presents its object as having may not be such as cause it to be toned with acquiescence or disquiescence. In that case it is not a desire.

(ii) There is a second question, in connexion with this topic, which McTaggart discusses in §§ 684 to 688 inclusive. It may be put as follows. All  $r$ -emotions are in fact  $r$ -states of prehension toned with one or more emotional qualities. But, as we know,  $r$ -states of prehension are very often introspectively misprehended as non-prehensive cogitations, such as judgments, suppositions, imagings, etc. And many  $r$ -emotions, in their cogitative aspect, are ostensible judgments or suppositions or imagings and are not ostensible prehensions. Therefore the following question arises. If a self prehends one of his own  $r$ -prehensions as a non-prehensive cogitation toned with a certain emotional quality, have we any right to assume that it really has the emotional quality which he prehends it as having? We know that he misprehends it in its *cogitative* aspect, since it is not really a judgment or a supposition;

what right have we to assume that he prehends it correctly in its *emotional* aspect? Obviously a similar question can be raised about ostensible *r*-volitions. Suppose that I introspectively prehend one of my *r*-prehensions as a judgment or a supposition toned with the quality of acquiescence, and therefore as a volition. It certainly has *not* the cogitative property of being a judgment or a supposition; how, then, can I be sure that it *has* the volitional quality of acquiescence?

McTaggart's doctrine on this point may be put as follows. The emotional quality which a prehension *really has* is determined entirely by the prehensional content which it *really has*. If a prehension is misprehended as a judgment or a supposition, it is prehendend as having a certain propositional content, which is always an extract from the prehensional content which it really has. Now the emotional quality which a prehension is prehendend as having when it is prehendend as a judgment or a supposition is determined entirely by the propositional content which it is then prehendend as having. Thus there is no reason whatever why the emotional quality which such a prehension is prehendend as having should be the same as the emotional quality which it in fact has. It is only in the case of *ostensible* prehensions that we have any right to assume that the emotional quality which a prehension appears on introspection to have is the same as the emotional quality which it really has.

McTaggart recognises that this extremely sceptical conclusion about one's own emotions and volitions would seem *prima facie* to be utterly subversive of all our judgments of value. He tries to show that, in the two important cases of ostensible love and ostensible moral approval and disapproval, the results are much less disturbing than they would seem to be at first sight. We will take these two cases in turn.

(a) No self in any of the *r*-stages *ostensibly* prehends any other self as such. At most he makes ostensible judgments about other selves. Suppose that *A* claims to love *B*. His only evidence for this statement is that he introspectively prehends certain of his *r*-prehensions as judgments and suppositions and imagings about *B*, toned with the erotic

emotional tone. The question is whether this is good evidence for holding that  $A$  really does love  $B$ . Now  $A$  really does love  $B$  if and only if he has  $r$ -prehensions and an  $\omega$ -prehension of  $B$ , i.e., prehensions of the form  $P_{AB}^r$  and  $P_{AB}$ . So the question comes to this. Is it reasonable to hold that the  $r$ -prehensions, which he misprehends as judgments, suppositions, and imagings about  $B$ , toned with the erotic emotional tone, are in fact of the form  $P_{AB}^r$ ?

I do not find McTaggart's argument in §687 at all satisfactory. I propose, therefore, to substitute the following for it. The prehensions which  $A$  introspectively prehends as his cogitations of  $B$  must be *either* of the form  $P_{AB}^r$  *or* of one of the forms  $P_{ACB}^r$ ,  $P_{ADCB}^r$ , ... etc. That is, they must be either of the form  $P_{AB}^r$  or  $P_{A...B}^r$ . For, if  $A$  neither prehended  $B$  nor had indirect perception of  $B$ , he could have no kind of ostensible cogitation of  $B$ . (McTaggart does not explicitly state this in §687. But I think that it is a necessary premise of his argument, and I think that he would accept it.) If this be granted, it is certain that  $A$  either *loves*  $B$  or *feels affection* for  $B$ . Now, by hypothesis, it appears to  $A$  that he is much more intimately united to  $B$  than to other selves whom he cogitates. But his cogitations of *all* these selves appear to him introspectively as judgments, suppositions, or imagings; so there is no peculiarity in the ostensible nature of his cogitation of  $B$  to account for this appearance of closer union with  $B$ . So there is a strong presumption that the outstanding introspectible peculiarity of  $A$ 's cogitations of  $B$ , as compared with his cogitations of other selves, is due to the fact that his cogitations of  $B$  really are *prehensions* of  $B$ , whilst his cogitations of the other selves really are *indirect perceptions* of them. And, if so,  $A$  really does love  $B$ . This is the best that I can make of McTaggart's argument. It has some weight, but is obviously not conclusive.

(b) If McTaggart's theory be true, it will still be possible to make ostensible hypothetical judgments about a self, of the following form: "If  $S$  prehends any prehension of his as a judgment or supposition whose propositional content is so-and-so, he will prehend it as toned with moral approval (or

with moral disapproval).'' In order to judge a person's moral character and dispositions such hypothetical information as this is all that is needed. Suppose I know that, when *A* ostensibly images acts of cruelty, he ostensibly images them with approval. And suppose I know that, when *B* ostensibly images acts of cruelty, he ostensibly images them with disapproval. This is enough to enable me to judge that *A* is of a cruel disposition and that *B* is of a kind disposition. I do not need to know whether the *r*-prehensions which they misprehend as these states of imaging are toned with approval or disapproval or neither. For the emotional tone, if any, of these *r*-prehensions is determined by their actual prehensional content. I do not know what this is. All that I know about it is that, when the *r*-prehension is misprehended as a state of imaging, the propositional content which it is prehended as having is a comparatively small selection from the prehensional content which it actually has.















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